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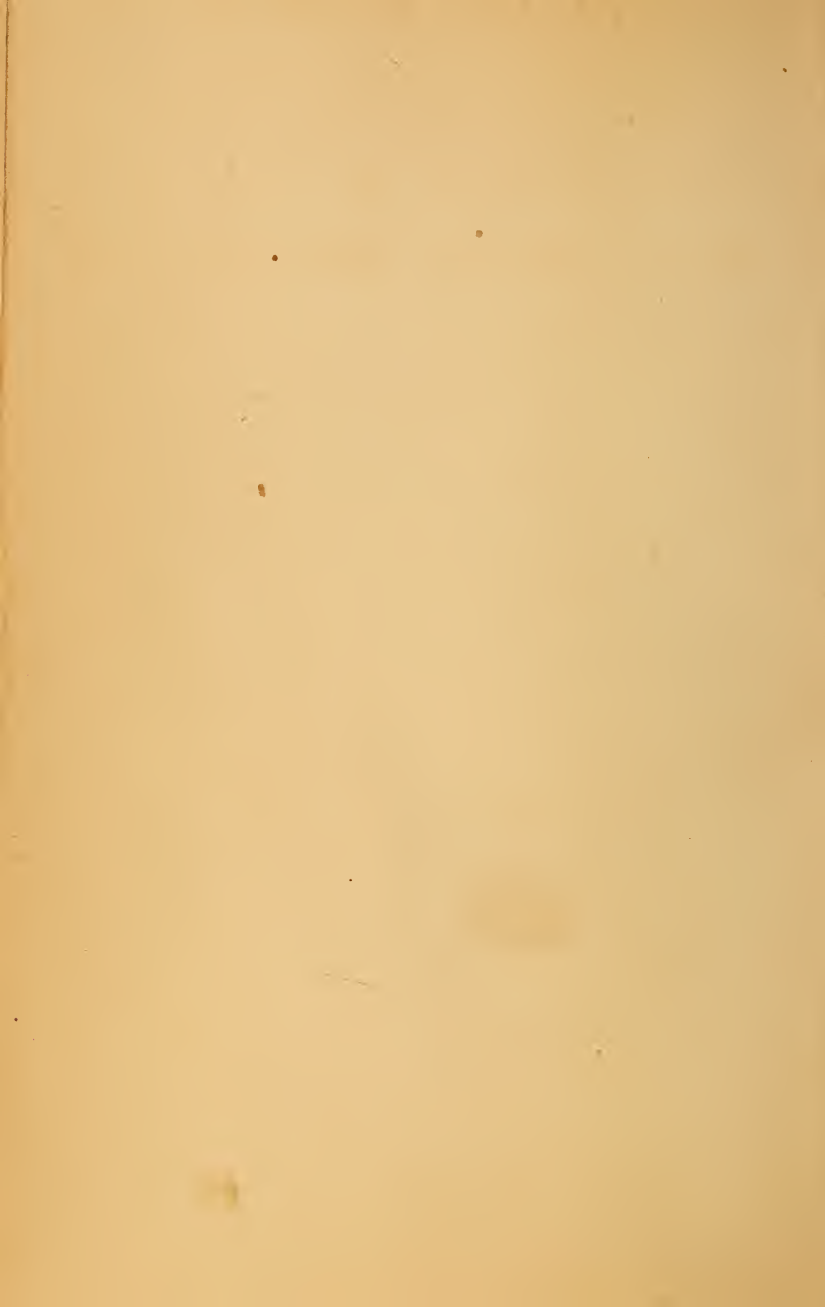
Chap. PR4129

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.







Miss Austin
Ex. To. B. N. B.

In remembrance of the
Rev. Barton Shuttleworth.



HOLSTEINBORG.

· A fairer object cheers not polar lands.

Canto 6, page 106.

THE
GREENLAND MINSTREL,

A Poem in Six Cantos:

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY NARRATIVE:

ILLUSTRATED

FROM DRAWINGS TAKEN ON THE SPOT,

DURING

A VOYAGE TO GREENLAND, IN THE YEAR 1826.

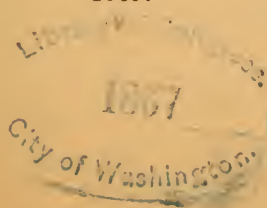
BY THE

REV. FREDERICK R. BLACKLEY,

Curate of Rotherham.

LONDON:
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PATERNOSTER ROW.

1839.



PR 4129
.B6

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E. A. W. A. P. 17, 1

TO THE
RIGHT HON. KENNETH ALEXANDER,
EARL OF EFFINGHAM,

THIS
Descriptive Poem

IS,
WITH PERMISSION, INSCRIBED,
BY HIS OBLIGED
AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

*The Gift of the Author's Friends
to N. B. & D. A. the Friends
of their mutual Friend The
Rev. B. A.*

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INTRODUCTORY NARRATIVE.



Group of Arctic Flowers, from a collection made by the Author in Lat. $72^{\circ} 30'$.

AN

INTRODUCTORY NARRATIVE.

SUCH was the interest excited among all classes of society, by the voyages of discovery in search of a north-west passage to India, that the author, with several other medical students at the University of Edinburgh, determined to occupy the vacant summer months of 1826, in a voyage to the north.

He sailed in the Ship U——, of H— commanded by Captain J——, and was thus enabled to visit the wandering inhabitants of Greenland, to observe their manners and customs, and to behold, during the period of the year in which the sun never sets, the peculiarly sublime scenery of some parts of North America.

In the course of the voyage the U—— came in contact with an iceberg, and was severely injured, and all hope, in consequence, of passing the Atlantic with safety being done away, it was determined by the Captain, whose perseverance and courage were beyond all praise, to sail for Holsteinborg, a Danish settlement, on the eastern side of Davis's Straits. Here the vessel was repaired; and, during the necessary stay, the author became acquainted with the Rev. K. Kijer the missionary at that place, with whom, and his excellent family, he passed one of the most interesting periods of his life. The piety, zeal, and devotedness of this laborious ambassador of Christ were peculiarly striking; nor had he laboured in vain. He had the delight of beholding, the (to him) interesting fact, that under his ministry a change had been wrought by the Holy Spirit, in the hearts and lives of many of the Esquimaux to whom he had preached "the glorious gospel of the blessed God."* As Barnabas at Antioch, so could Kijer at Holsteinborg,

* 1 Tim. i. 11.

see the grace of God;* and “glad was he that the hitherto moral desert began to rejoice and blossom as the rose.”†

Through the labours of the great Egede, and of succeeding missionaries, the Scriptures have been translated into Greenlandish.

How true are the words of Cowper—

“God gives the word, the preachers throng around,
Live from his lips, and spread the glorious sound:
That sound bespeaks salvation on her way,
The trumpet of a life-restoring day;
'Tis heard where England's eastern glory shines,
And in the gulphs of her cornubian mines.
And still it spreads. See Germany send forth
Her sons to pour it on the farthest north:
Fir'd with a zeal peculiar, they defy
The rage and rigour of a polar sky,
And plant successfully, sweet Sharon's rose,
On icy plains and in eternal snows.”

The life of a missionary, even in a temperate zone, is not without suffering and danger. What therefore must it be in an inclement region like that of Greenland, and at a station within the arctic

* Acts xi. 23.

† Isa. xxxv. 1.

circle? It is there fraught with ten-fold more of trial and privation. Nevertheless, to these distant stations and out-posts of the world there are those whom the "love of Christ constrains" to go to seek the wandering sons of men. And among this holy and glorious band pre-eminently stands the missionary to whom we have already referred.

The Rev. K. Kijer is a Danish clergyman of the Lutheran Church, whose friends reside at Skorup Horsens, in Denmark. To become the missionary Chaplain at Holsteinborg he left his native land, in September, 1819, and soon began to feel the effects of a severe climate. But, though from that time to the present his health has suffered greatly, he counts not his life dear unto himself, so that he may finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he has received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

In one of his letters to the author, he says, "My residence in Greenland for many years as a missionary among the poor Esquimaux, is not one of the most brilliant in the world; particularly when my circumstances are considered, and the weak-

* Acts xx. 24.

ness I suffer from the inclemency of the weather. I have reason, notwithstanding all, to praise our heavenly Father, that these trying chastisements have been for my good."

A Danish missionary receives annually about £60, together with some trifling allowances from Government. It will therefore readily be acknowledged that the difficulties which this servant of God has to encounter must be great. Heavenly assistance and support are required, in an especial manner, to enable him to meet the peculiarities of his post, the dangers of the climate, the difficulties in his ministrations, and, above all, the darkness of heathenism. A review alone of these things is enough to freeze the efforts of the most enthusiastic philanthropist, enough to daunt the most courageous heart, and to overwhelm the most powerful and enlarged soul, unassisted and unsustained by the arm of Omnipotence.

In 1825 this holy man started, in a small boat, to visit a distant settlement under his pastoral care, and, in his progress, he, sometimes, sowed the seed of the everlasting gospel among the wandering heathen hordes of one island, and other times raised

the standard of the cross to settled inhabitants and hopeful congregations of another. On one of the lengthening days of April, a storm suddenly overtook him and his companions, and they were cast on a small desert and wretched island, where they were compelled to remain for three days. During this time the tempest was unabated, and it often threatened to wash them off from the half-deluged rock on which they had been cast. The wind was so high, that it was impossible for them even to rear a tent to defend them from the unrelenting fury of the storm: wet, and cold by the continued vehemence of a northern blast, with their little stock of provisions exhausted, they grasped the icy rock, to maintain, if possible, their situation during the drifting gust, which appeared ready to bury them in the foaming billows. At length they were compelled to satisfy the cravings of hunger, by gathering and eating the scanty herbage which here and there grew between the crevices of the rocks. On the morning of the fourth day the tempest abated a little, and, prompted by hunger, being almost at the last extremity, they launched in hope—and with many an anxious

sigh—their shattered boat, with scarcely strength enough left to row to the not far distant shore. And although Mr. Kijer experienced from this exposure an affection of the head, and was much enfeebled, he proceeded onward in his missionary expedition, beset with cold, hunger, and want, proclaiming to those degraded sons of Adam, with whom he came in contact, the truths of the Christian religion. At length he arrived at the station he set out for, 120 miles from home, where having set things in order, and exhorted that part of his flock “to cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart,” he returned to Holsteinborg, animated and encouraged by the presence of his God, and rejoicing in being counted worthy to serve in the Redeemer’s cause. He thus writes in one of his letters: “I am assured that whatever may be the will of God concerning me, whether life or death, all will end in my true happiness.”

Captain Sir John Ross’s account of Holsteinborg* is truly interesting, and confirming all the author has stated, he has ventured to insert it. It is as follows:—

* See Second Voyage, p. 63.

“We found the governor, named Kall, a person of very prepossessing manners and appearance. He seemed about thirty years of age, and had been resident during six, with the charge of this district, under the title of Colonies Bestyrere, subject to the Governor of Liefly, who has the rank of major in the Danish navy. The clergyman named Kijer, seemed to be about the same age, with the manners and language of a well-educated and intelligent man. He had been resident during the same time, with a wife and small family.”

“We landed under a salute, an honour which I did not expect, but which we returned afterwards, of course, as soon as an opportunity occurred: we were received by Mrs. Kijer, who was in waiting to conduct us to their hospitable mansion; and, in both, commander Ross was delighted to recognize two old acquaintances, having known them during a former voyage at the whale Islands. Fortunately, knowing the Danish myself, I was enabled to converse with this lady also, as her knowledge did not, like her husband’s, extend to the English language. We were treated with what we might here consider an elegant repast of venison and other things, and

served by Esquimaux females in their native costume, but far surpassing in cleanliness those with whom we had been in communication on former occasions; and, moreover, decorated with a profusion of beads, and their hair bound with pink handkerchiefs.

“After dinner we inspected the settlement, which consisted of the governor’s and clergyman’s houses, a church, two storehouses, a bakehouse, and about forty Esquimaux huts. The two houses were built of wood, having a ground story, containing a commodious dining-room, a good bed-room, a small parlour, and a kitchen, the governor’s having an extra room adjoining, for the accommodation of his two boats’ crews and two pilots. The apartments were low and having cross beams, and the ceiling resembling the fore cabin of a 50 gun ship: the upper story, containing only bed-rooms for servants, being a species of attic. To the church there is a small steeple, somewhat surmounting the building, the inside being neat and plain, with an organ at one extremity, and the altar at the other, though the former was not seen, as it had been sent home to be repaired.

“The church is capable of containing 200 persons, and is well attended; the sermon and prayers being in the Esquimaux and in the Danish language, on the alternate Sundays. I need not say that the Danish form is Lutheran; nor need I repeat the praise so well deserved and so often bestowed on the Danish government, for their attention to the spiritual welfare of the Greenlanders; and as little need I notice the well-known success which has attended the labours of the worthy clergymen who have undertaken this office, under such a banishment and such privations. The store-house at the landing place is the receptacle of all heavy articles, and at the other, higher up, some of the people reside. There is no view of the sea from the town, the harbour alone being visible. It is defended from the east by high rocks, and also from the west by others, so as to be well sheltered; while it is covered from the south, though at a greater distance, by the huge mountain called the Old Woman’s Hood, and has also a prospect of a range of loftier hills fronting the harbour. It is thus a really interesting and almost a romantic spot; nevertheless, scarcely endurable as a residence, were

even a tolerable portion of the year such as it chanced to be at our visit. From an eminence, a little way beyond it, we obtained a fine view of the sea and its countless islands ; forming an interesting maritime landscape, out of the power of our pencils at least, if not of better ones than ours. And from the same point we could discern our own floating home, lying snug in her little cove.

“ The Esquimaux name of this town, is Tirieniak Pudlit, meaning, as we understand, the ‘foxes’ holes.’ ”

The author saw much of Greenland. He remembers with what feelings of astonishment he beheld the first immense iceberg near cape Farewell ; and the surprise with which he saw, passing before him, the mighty whale, fit inhabitant of the fathomless ocean. Of course, during his absence from home for several months among these northern regions, he had to encounter many dangers ; he and his companions had many hair-breadth escapes : his own ship was once nearly wrecked ; but that from which, through the gracious interposition of Providence, he himself was delivered, happened to others. With his own eyes he saw a vessel destroyed,

amongst fields of ice, close to his own. On one occasion the author was in the midst of danger when he was not dreaming of it. He was on shore, in a high latitude, and having wandered from the rest of the party, inland, partridge-shooting, as he was proceeding across a ravine to a verdant valley—having advanced but a short distance over the ice and snow—his attention was excited by a loud rumbling noise which increased at every step. To his astonishment he found that a cataract was rushing along with deafening roar beneath the incrustation on which he was walking; and scarcely was he alive to the dreadful fact, before he sank through up to his arms—there seemed but a step between him and death; the more he struggled and endeavoured to force himself up with his feet, the larger the cavity became, and he had nothing to depend upon but the frozen crust on the top; he placed his gun across, and with great exertion and care succeeded, after an hour and a half's toil, in getting on terra firma. With peculiar feelings of thankfulness and joy he retreated from the spot, in the best way he could, and after a long search found his companions, and returned to the ship.

At another time he was in a boat with several officers, attacking a herd of walruses which lay sleeping on a field of ice, not far from the ship: they approached them, and fired, and wounded several: it was thought advisable to pull up close to them, and endeavour to lance them. Just at that moment two, as large as bullocks, near the edge of the ice, rolled over into the sea, and had the boat been a foot nearer, it must have been destroyed: so furious were they, that they came up close to it. The thickness of their skins was such that they could not be easily penetrated; and they were glad, before their boat was too much injured, to hasten back to the ship. A day or two afterwards a walrus was slain, but the lance which pierced it could not be extricated. It was extracted however when the animal was cut to pieces; but such had been the strength of the muscles, that it was found to be turned in every direction like a corkscrew.

The author had requested Captain J—— to inform him when he saw from the mast-head a moderate-sized bear on any piece of ice that might be not far distant, as he should like to go and encounter one. On a very fine day, when they

were near cape Searle, the captain requested him to take his gun, and get into the boat which was lying alongside, with one of the crew in it—he did so. Mr. L—— the second mate, being on deck, the author requested him to accompany him: they proceeded in the direction the captain pointed out to them; when turning the point of a field of ice, they beheld a polar bear sitting very quietly, and seemingly not at all disturbed by their appearance. Mr. L——, who was the better shot, took the gun, which was loaded with two bullets, while the author was armed with a whale lance: they pulled up with all their force to take the bear by surprise, but he was ready for them, and never moved. Mr. L—— took up the first thing he could find in the boat, and threw it at the monster, which caused him to dash into the water, and endeavour to swim away: when the bear found he could not escape, it turned upon them: Mr. L—— fired: all was commotion; the bear roared, and came forward to attack them, and seemed determined to enter the boat, and even seized an oar: the author lanced the bear, and kept him off till Mr. L—— pierced its vitals; the blood

ran in profusion from his wounds ; he then fell back exhausted, and expired : a rope having been thrown round his neck, they towed him to the ship, perfectly satisfied with their achievement.

The Esquimaux are not devoid of affection nor gratitude, particularly when they have had instruction from the christian missionaries. The author was struck with the conduct of one Greenlander, an inhabitant of the eastern side of Davis's-straits. He came on board and shewed great anxiety : he looked like an aged chief, and made signs that he wanted assistance. It being discovered that his wife was dying, he was given to understand that every assistance should be afforded that was possible. The author therefore went on shore, and found him waiting to conduct him to his home : it was a small square habitation, in a retired but fertile spot ; it was cleaner than the usual native residences, and there were more comforts to be seen than are generally observed : the place was divided, and one, half formed the bed—on it lay the Esquimaux's wife suffering from disease. After examining her the author directed the husband to come for some medicine, in the course of the afternoon. He then

strolled about the country, and returned to the ship; but he had scarcely got on deck, when he heard something like footsteps close behind, or so near as to cause him to turn round quickly; to his surprise he observed this aged Greenlander ready to take the medicine to his dying wife: and no sooner had he got it than he hastened on deck, dropt into his canoe, and quickly disappeared among the rocks which project into the sea at that part of the coast. The woman became better, her disease having been palliated by the medicine given; and, in gratitude, the aged chief, her husband, in a few days after, brought the author a present—it was a fine antler—the rein-deer to which it belonged must have been a noble animal.

A very beautiful specimen of Rein-deer is now preserved in the University of Edinburgh: it was sent by Mr. Kijer, of Holsteinborg, to the author, who had great pleasure in presenting it to his old Alma Mater. Professor Jameson declares it to be the finest specimen in Great Britain.

The females among the Greenlanders have very sweet voices, and they are very willing to sing; on one occasion the author having requested several

to gratify him in this respect, he was struck with the great simplicity and harmony of the music. Where the natives have received instruction they have made considerable progress in civilization; their houses are better built, they have little windows with four divisions and glazed, often there is a little cupboard and cups and saucers: books are valued and preserved with great care. The author having been very much pleased with a little girl, a smiling little creature, wrapped in furs, her mother took down a book and turned over the leaves, and found a piece of paper which she shewed to him, as the certificate of the baptism of her daughter. It was impossible not to notice the progress the children appeared to have made at Holsteinborg: great was their anxiety to learn to read and write: it was very interesting to behold them in their skin dresses regarding what was said with the greatest attention; and when they joined in singing the praises of God it was truly affecting.

The Esquimaux are not devoid of understanding, and an enterprising mind may often be discovered: Christianity is doing great things for them. One evening a great number of Esquimaux came to the

ship in their canoes ; and, to see their skill in throwing the dart and spear, biscuits were hung from the yard arm ; they were brought up in regular order, and, from a distance of about twice the length of the ship, they were directed to throw the spear : some were very expert ; one excelled all the rest, and, to preserve the biscuits whole, repeatedly struck the thread a little above them ; when they dropped into the water he skimmed along with peculiar elegance, and with the end of his paddle took them up and placed them on his canoe. This biscuit-fête continued for some time, and was exceedingly amusing to all parties. The author could not but observe the aspiring disposition of one native, who seemed to have had greater opportunities than the rest, and knew a few English words ; when he came on board he looked about for the spy-glass, and put it under one arm, and the speaking-trumpet under the other. He then strutted about the deck, talking to his countrymen, who were in their canoes below him ; amidst roars of laughter he turned to the sailors, and explained to them what he was doing, by saying, “ me capataine,” and then he put the speaking-trumpet to his mouth,

and shouted in his own guttural language, evidently vastly satisfied with his own supposed greatness.

Where the natives have been taught, they value the Scriptures: a fact which came under the author's observation will be sufficient to prove this. At a village called Opernovick, the author visited the natives, accompanied by Captain J——, and there they found a Greenlander who could read, and was an instructor of the rising generation—he was evidently looked up to by all the inhabitants; upon enquiry they found he did not possess a copy of the word of God, and they promised on the next day to return and present him with one. Accordingly Captain J—— and the author went ashore, at the time appointed, with a copy of the Scriptures in the Esquimaux language: the whole of the villagers were collected together, the book was produced, every eye was fixed upon it, and it was given to this Esquimaux reader: he received it with great reverence, opened it, and read a little, then shut it up and opened it again, then he turned it over, put it under his arm, and into his bosom, and by every expression of joy and satisfaction, convinced us that he knew the value of the gift, and would read it

himself, and instruct others in that word which is able to make men wise into salvation.

A fine intelligent-looking Esquimaux boy, three years of age, at the same village, took the attention of the author: he repeated, in English, after him with surprising accuracy: the author put him on his knees, placed his little hands together, and he repeated after him a prayer, that God would look upon him and his benighted countrymen, and send them the light of the Gospel, the blessings of civilization, and cause those to feel for them who possessed the knowledge of salvation, that they too might enjoy mercy, and have a hope blooming with immortality and future glory.

The courage of the Greenlander is often put to the test; they encounter the walrus, the bear, and even the whale. They are not wanting in feeling and energy in the time of danger: this is seen from the fact that christian natives, residing at Holsteinborg, go out many miles in their frail canoes to help the distressed merchantmen, who, half-wrecked, seek that friendly port; and thus they act as pilots, and are welcome on board, as in the case of the ship U——, in which the author sailed.

The continent of ice which surrounds the Pole being more conspicuous than common, owing to their position in Baffin's Bay, and the clear state of the atmosphere, the author took a sketch, from which the second plate has been engraved. The boundary or edge of this incalculably vast continent was steep, precipitous, and craggy; and, though the glass appeared broken into immense chasms in all directions, and forming near the extremity vast perpendicular peaks and masses, of hundreds of feet in height, the cracks and vacuities on the surface extended as far as the eye could discern. The floating islands around gave them a sublime idea of the parent ice.

One of the most remarkable promontories, on the north American shores of Davis's-straits, is cape Searle; this precipitous, but in some places projecting, rock, is of an astonishing height; the vast masses which hang from its perpendicular cliffs, seem to threaten destruction to every thing beneath. The snow lodged upon its elevated crest and shelving sides, produces a beautiful effect. Innumerable gulls sported around, and filled the air with their cries, darting down to the waters beneath, or in still

greater multitudes taking possession of its aerial pinnacles. This cape often proves a safe and friendly retreat for ships in stormy weather, under the exalted peaks and battlements of which they can sail in security and peace, while the distant horizon is agitated by angry billows and tempestuous winds.

A more enchanting scene than was here exhibited the author never before beheld: the setting sun, with indescribable magnificence, dissipated the black clouds which had obscured his rays, and Nature's mighty landscape was at once disclosed to view. A fleet of sixty sail, the birds, the icebergs, and the towering monument, alike were tinged with that golden brightness which baffles description, and mocks the efforts of the most skilful artist.

The further they proceeded inland among the Froe islands, the higher the hills and mountains appeared. The sudden termination of some of the lofty lands which were peculiarly grand near the shore, was less common: the vallies became sloping and regular; dwarfy willow, grasses, sorrel, poppies, and other arctic plants were abundant; the vallies were tinged with verdure, and the distant mountains

fearlessly pierced the sky, covered with an immense body of ice and snow which seemed to absorb the heat of the cloudless sun without the least diminution.

One remarkable fact connected with this voyage the author cannot overlook: his brother, (the late Edwin Blackley, Esq., M.D., who died, much lamented, at Bombay, in the year 1838,) sailed in the H—— of H——, the same year to Greenland: they traversed the same regions, and yet, strange to tell, the two ships never met; at times there were sixty or seventy sail together, and almost every other vessel, out the same season, they had an opportunity of seeing; those however which contained the author and his brother met not. The ships in which they were left the north, and returned home to England at their own time: on approaching the river H——, the two vessels drew near to each other, and in that river the author hailed his brother for the first time since they had left England; and, although they had sailed so many thousand miles, they had not to wait half an hour for each other on the quay. It was with feelings which none can describe but those who have been long absent from their native land, that they set foot

again on shore. With joy they hastened to the house of a kind friend at H——, and were informed of the welfare of their dear relatives, and of their revered father's having been presented, during their absence, to the Vicarage of the Parish in which he had officiated for twelve years. They soon reached their happy home, and felt more and more attached to England, the highly-favoured land of their nativity. How expressive are the words of the poet:—

“ Where'er I roam, whatever lands I see,
My heart untravelled, fondly turns to thee.”

The author, in giving this sketch of his voyage, cannot help remarking that the more he considers the condition of the natives of Greenland and northern parts of America, the more he is convinced of the duty of all to pity them and help them; in particular, British Christians should be animated with the same zeal and unbounded charity and love which filled the mind of Bishop Heber when he penned the following lines:

“ From Greenland’s icy mountains,
From India’s choral strand,
Where Afric’s sunny fountains
Roll down their golden sand;
From many an ancient river,
From many a balmy plain,
They call us to deliver
Their land from error’s chain.
Salvation ! Oh salvation !
The joyful sound proclaim,
Till each remotest nation
Has learnt Messiah’s name.”

A year after his return, several Christian friends united with the author in sending to the Rev. K. Kijer various presents, books, &c., &c., to encourage him in his work: one of the results was, that Mr. Kijer translated from hymn-books then presented to him a selection of hymns for the use of the Esquimaux in Holsteinborg; and now, on the returning festival of Christ’s nativity, the following beautiful hymn, by J. Montgomery, Esq. is sung among the wilds of Greenland:—

I.

Angels from the realms of glory,
 Wing your flight o'er all the earth :
 Ye, who sang creation's story,
 Now proclaim Messiah's birth.
 Come and worship ;
 Worship Christ, the new-born King.

I.

Ivngertose isuanit
 Gubib sennarsoeenik
 ivngernigitse, Engelit!
 annengnøetlartulleenik!
 nunarsoak kollaudlugo
 tamannut nallunøerdlugo—
 innungortok niarna!
 illuvsigun irsugluse
 unnersioromar parse
 innungortok niarna.

II.

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
 Watching o'er your flock by night ;
 God with man is now residing ;
 Yonder shines the infant light.
 Come and worship ;
 Worship Christ, the new-born King.

II.

Nersutinnik pigartose !
 Sub kaumarsalerpase ?
 kiopøet tikerartise ?
 sumik Okarfigase ?
 nunarsoak erkriksile !
 kotsingneug ussornarsile !
 innungortok niarna !
 illuvsigun irsugluse
 unnersioromar parse
 innungortok niarna.

III.

Sages, leave your contemplations ;
 Brighter visions beam afar :
 Seek the great desire of nations,
 Ye have seen his natal star.
 Come and worship ;
 Worship Christ, the new-born King.

III.

Iisimaniartose !
 tipeitsugadlaritse ;
 isumaliyssøerdluse
 Gudimut kiyagitse !
 tekkosiuk adloriak
 tamannit kreblernerryvsak
 innungortok niarna
 illuvsigun irsugluse
 unnersiorom arparse
 innungortok niarna.

Since writing the above Introductory Narrative the author has visited the continent of Europe ; and having resided nearly two years in Switzerland,

has had frequent opportunities of exploring many of the frigid wilds and romantic scenes in that part of the world. On Mount St. Gothard, one of the highest inhabited points, he passed a night, and from that region beheld the sun rise in peculiar splendour and magnificence: one thing particularly struck his mind—it was the similarity of the appearance of the alpine glaciers to those he had beheld in the arctic regions: and what Goldsmith has said of the inhabitants of Switzerland, will apply to the inhabitants of the North:

“ Dear is that shed to which his soul conforms,
And dear that hill which lifts him to the storms :
And as a child, when scaring sounds molest,
Clings close and closer to the mother’s breast ;
So the loud torrent and the whirlwind’s roar,
But bind him to his native mountains more.”

Vicarage, Rotherham,
July 31st, 1839.

ERRATA.

Page 25, line 4, *for Usker read Uskee.*

— 77, from line 7 to the end of the Canto, omit a comma.

— 80, line 5, *for widely read wisely.*

— 107, — 7, *for retain read reclaim.*

— 109, — 8, *for Esquimauxs read Esquimaux.*

CANTO I.



THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.



A VIEW OF THE CONTINENT OF ICE, AS SEEN IN BAFFIN'S BAY.

Eternal glaciers—barriers vast, unknown,
Which, like a continent of ice, extends,
Till with the clouds the faint horizon blends.

THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.

CANTO I.

MINE be the task to sing of lands of snow,
Of icy grandeur spread, where'er you go;
Where dwarfish tribes in state untutor'd stray,
And Greenland wonders tempt the vent'rous lay;
Of Polar scenes, mighty snow-capp'd mountains;
Wild desert wastes, or Winter's icy fountains;
Majestic monuments, and vast descents;
Stupendous caverns, and unfathom'd rents,

Extensive commons, bays and inlets lone,
Eternal glaciers—barrier vast, unknown !¹
Which, like a continent of ice, extends,
Till with the clouds the faint horizon blends.
These strike the traveller's mind with solemn dread,
As on the craggy cliff he seeks to tread,
And as from off the height he turns his eyes, |
He seems as though uplifted to the skies,
And views, with rapturous gaze, the frigid world
Beneath his feet in one expanse unfurl'd.
Here rocks on rocks, and hills on mountains rise,
And mountains fearless penetrate the skies.
Here caverns deep, conceal'd from human sight,
Defy the piercing rays of solar light.
Here rugged capes, precipitous, and steep,²
Form mighty bulwarks to the foaming deep,

And rugged cliffs, and ridges strange, appear,
Cradled in bleaching storms from year to year ;
Echoing aloud the ocean's solemn roar,
As waves tempestuous dash from shore to shore ;
While headlands tow'ring from the ravine bed,
Present an everlasting fleecy head ;
And Nature, wrapt in one vast frigid dress,³
Glories in frightful, wildest, barrenness !

A thousand years have scarcely past away,⁴
Since o'er the main Norwegians bent their way,
And first discovered Greenland's distant strands,
Which, varied then, could boast of verdant lands.
This new-found coast rais'd high the sanguine heart,
And led a fleet of settlers to depart.

They claim'd the territories, far and wide,
And flourish'd there in civil power and pride.
When suddenly oblivion ends their tale,
And but conjectures of their fate prevail;—
Whether by hunger, cold, or Skreelings slain
Their settlements in ruins now remain !

Yes,—Time's mysterious and resistless hand ⁵
Has since envelop'd ev'ry northern land ;
As well the sunken land of Buss, well known,
Where dark forgetfulness resides alone.
O'er this lost island, raging to the skies,
How fearfully the dashing seas arise.
Even in calms the waves roll furious there,
And mariners the spot avoid with care ;

And when the eye does on West Friesland dwell,
Where once a hundred towns have flourished well,
It quick recoils with horror from the scene,
Where, now engulph'd the once proud isle had been

Intrepid leaders have, as hist'ry shows,
Brav'd polar dangers and eternal snows :—
Some to the north, in quest of gold, have sail'd,
Although each previous expedition fail'd ;
Some, from ambition, in these regions wild,
By prospects fair, have found their minds beguil'd ;
And some return'd in time, but others shar'd
The wretched fate their absence soon declar'd.
The sixteenth cent'ry just began to spread
Its fleeting years on time's grave hoary head,

When Hudson, though a suff'rer by defeat,
Set sail again, adventures new to greet.
Upheld by valour, as experience grew,
He saw success within his raptur'd view :
Fresh plans, well laid, to countries unexplor'd
Again his soul inspir'd, and all on board ;
And having cross'd the wide Atlantic sea,
A strait and bay, before unknown, they see.
Elated with the grand discov'ry made,
They thought the blooming prospect could not fade.
Too sanguine hopes drown'd ev'ry wiser thought,
And with success the early spring seem'd fraught.
A place secure they, therefore, quickly chose,
Where they might find, thro' winter's months repose.
The snow it fell, the ice augmented fast,
When, lo ! they find provisions would not last.

Hudson afflicted saw their hapless state,
And griev'd for others', more than his own fate.
The rising tear his heartfelt grief declar'd,
As, with his men, the scanty stock he shar'd.
His gen'rous soul true sympathy exprest ;
He strove to solace ev'ry troubled breast ;
Assuaging even grief's vindictive gloom
By hope of changes to avert their doom.
But, ah ! the crew, to mutiny dispos'd,
Unsoftened by distress, their chief oppos'd.
The treach'rous band, by vice and passion blind,
Were to the foulest deeds full soon inclin'd.
Infernal pow'r, perfidious, prov'd their guide,
And vilest acts were in succession tried.
O dreadful hour in time's unvaried course !
In which the rebel band's superior force

Cast Hudson, and the faithful of the crew,
Forlorn adrift, 'mid cold and hunger too.
They clung with faithful fondness, truly great,
Around their Captain in this desp'rate state.
Their destiny was fix'd, the briny wave
And hoary ice proclaim'd a certain grave.
The murd'rous rebels, left on board, soon found,
Increasing hardships all their efforts crowned ;
While dread starvation, as they maddening raged,
A war of speedy retribution waged.
Just Heav'n appear'd to damp each hopeful ray,
Distress and woe approach'd from day to day.
They had, but lately, adamantine hearts
And now despair acutest fear imparts.
O'erwhelm'd by fell disease, and want of food,
The crew, in numbers daily feebler, stood ;

Till scarce a weak survivor lived to hail,
His native land, and tell the treach'rous tale.

The northern clime seem'd to attract each band,
As though some treasure rested on the land ;
And many a tempted crew, enraptur'd, spread
Their vent'rous sails, by expectations led.
Some, like Columbus, sought an unknown world,
Where fame to them her banners had unfurl'd,
Or, through those seas and straits, undaunted tried
To the Pacific in their barks to ride.
Each new attempt new hopes and prospects fir'd,
And e'en repulse increasing zeal inspir'd.
Who but admires the noble courage shown
By those brave Britons in the frigid zone ;

Exploring lands where summer seldom smiles,
And safely reaching Georgia's northern Isles?
To Icy Cape they nearly half-way ran,
And thus kind heav'n approv'd their hopeful plan.
Nor less th' advent'urers, who, with slight defence,
Brav'd arctic winters and the cold intense,
The storm, the snow, the ice, the blasts they bore,
The matchless sons of fair Britannia's shore!
Yet none can find the glorious marine strait
E'en after danger and privation great.
Ten thousand inlets, bays, and trackless strands,
Are all that crown research in Polar lands.



CANTO II.



THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.



ICE-BERG.

Here mighty walls, that like a fort extend,
And tow'ring heights with hov'ring vapours blend.
A ship, in all her gay attire, seems lost
Beneath such gorgeous citadels of frost.

Canto 2, page 20.

THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.

CANTO II.

Have Greece and Rome their charms for song suppli'd
With heroes, deemed to deities allied,
And Kings and Sages, of conspicuous name,
Whose warlike deeds had spread their lasting fame,
Amongst those lands that peace and comfort know,
Or countries rich that Nature's beauties show?
Did they the sightless Bard whilom inspire
To touch with matchless pow'r his tuneful lyre?

From Virgil's pipe draw the melodious strain,
So that each age vibrates the sound again ?
The Greenland regions no such sweets convey,
But scenes peculiar and sublime display;
And rocks, and hills, and seas, and vallies show,
God's works, all perfect in that world of snow !
Man too finds here, in northern lands a home,
And loves, unknown, in barb'rous clans to roam,
Although the summer scarce may tinge the plain
With verdant hues, ere winter comes again.
How diff'rent this from genial lands, well known
In those blest climes I love to call my own ;
Where rippling streams through richest dales are seen,
And Nature robes herself in sylvan green ;
Where emulation cheers each happy brow,
That throngs the city, or attends the plough ;

Where all may reap their annual stock of wealth,
And by their daily toils ensure their health ;
Where Liberty in her mild reign is felt,
And peaceful Justice through long years has dwelt
Where true Religion through the isle abounds,
And Albion's shores with praise to God resounds.
Elysium, fam'd, not half the bliss conceals,
As that which each domestic circle deals
To every member, whose contented mind
Has peace, and charity, and love combined !
Priz'd friendship there, approving and approv'd,
Sincerely dwells, unshaken and unmov'd ;
And peace internal, and unchanging love,
Th' unfading sources of enjoyment prove.
Dear native land, through thee full oft I stroll'd,
And spent, in youthful musings, hours untold,

Where seen through woods, array'd in simplest dress,
The fertile banks the limpid streams repress ;
Where 'mid rich verdure, towering to the skies,
The ancient spire or ivy'd ruins rise ;
Where spacious meads their varied fragrance yield,
And songsters chaunt, in sylvan shades conceal'd ;
Where fanning breezes waft the grateful sound
Of vespers echoing to the heavens around ;
And where the clouds, in brightness, far extend,
And with the various shades harmonious blend,
To form a canopy of golden hue,
To crown the peaceful and enchanting view.
E'en should far distant lands their gifts ensure,
And boons profuse the steps awhile allure.
These cherish'd scenes prompt memory relates,
While longer absence larger love creates ;

And dangers great, and suff'rings undefin'd,
But gild this sweet associate of the mind—
Such as the weary trav'ler joyful knows,
And cheers the wand'rer, wheresoe'er he goes ;
The heart re-echoes home, with pure delight,
And ecstasy attends th' enraptured sight.

When Winter on his icy chariot stands,
Congealing all, throughout the polar lands,
And lucid streams, like rocks, 'midst which they glide,
In silence wait, till heat from Summer's tide
Disperse the frozen masses, till they run
In passive duty to the golden sun ;
And when, from off the rocky heights they fall,
They'd break the wanton slumber, and would call

For leagues around the echo of their roaring,
As to th' abyss they hurry, onward pouring,
And then, as if exhausted, join the swell
Of mother Ocean, bidding land farewell.
Enormous bergs, detach'd from glacier piles,⁶
To distant climates send, like floating isles,
And though but fragments of the store immense,
That grasp the pole, and man repulses thence,
Yet some such fearful magnitude display,
As fills the trav'ler there with dire dismay.
Here lofty gothic arch, transparent, blue ;⁷
There caverns, rough and hollow, lost to view :
Here mighty walls, that, like a fort, extend,
And tow'ring heights with hov'ring vapours blend.
A ship, in all her gay attire, seems lost
Beneath such gorgeous citadels of frost.

Peculiar wonders through the north extend ;
Sublimest scenes o'er every step impend ;
Pure as the light, which darts with magic speed ;
Minute as finny tribes or fruitful seed ;
Firm as the hard, imbodyed, flinty, rock ;
Wild as the blasts, that tow'ring turrets mock ;
Awful as central earth's internal quake ;
Perfect as pow'r Divine alone can make ;
Vast as the ocean's far and near domain ;
High as the clouds their farthest march maintain :
Where'er the mind would turn, or eye could rest,
Jehovah's might and glory stands confest !

The moon, so long the friend of polar earth,
Grows jealous now of her neglected worth ;

And oft, behind some rocky mountain drear,
She waits in vain to show her pow'r to cheer :
Or, peeping through the twilight, once again
Strives to resume her empire o'er the plain,
Or smiles to see reflected in the main
Her mild and silv'ry image on the wane.
At last, queen-like, she hastes with matchless grace
O'er realms where Phœbus erst has left his trace.
The Greenlander the genial change beholds,
And to his friends he thus his hopes unfolds—
“ Ere long, from this our winter cot we'll go,
“ In search of lands, less fraught with ice and
 snow ;
“ Where summer sweets our gloomy thoughts shall
 cheer,
“ And dissipate the reign of famine here.

“ No more shall sorrow check our peaceful smile,
“ No more shall care and want our joys beguile.
“ Those rumbling sounds create new hopes in me,
“ Yon restless main, convuls’d, I love to see ;
“ The passing storm is big with blessings rare,
“ And each canoe, come ! hasten to prepare.”
E’en summer here in rosy splendour reigns,^s
And o’er the earth her sceptre still maintains :
The shoot and seed are foster’d, night and day,
And brought to blossom to each solar ray :
The northern plains, with grass and moss o’ergrown,
Have powr’ful charms to denizens well known :
Delighted often with the sunny scene,
They rest, enchanted, on some sloping green,
E’en icy masses, tinged with radiant light,
Are objects sweet to their admiring sight ;

And they conclude the beauties of the world
Are there, in their dear native land, unfurl'd.
To them the snows or rocky shores how fair !
Where first they breath'd their own—their native air.
They find their wishes all concentr'd there :
They ask no better place, nor richer fare.
Their homes are dear to them, as home can be,
Their wives, canoe, their dogs, and family ;
Their thoughts suffice them for the present day ;
Their griefs are by contentment chas'd away.
And happiest they, whene'er it proves their lot,
To find their wants supplied around their cot.
Society, in its refined estate,
The princely manners of the rich and great,
The pomp of retinue, the pow'r of kings,
Are to the Esquimaux unmeaning things,

Nor gold, nor silver, has for them a charm,
Nor flocks nor herds, that stock the richest farm.
Objects, for which one half the world are mad,
Would neither make the Usker pleas'd or sad.⁹
Attach'd to home, he courts not distant lands,
Nor has a wish to leave his polar strands.
“Its wat'ry bosom soon will soothe our eyes,
“And smiling plenty we shall realize!”

CANTO III.



THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.





THE SHIP U—, IN A STORM.

When lo! the water's unexpected rage,
And foaming surges, all their pow'rs engage.
The western sea with fury mounts on high,
And northern gales proclaim new dangers nigh.

THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.

CANTO III.

BRITANNIA, seated on her ocean-throne,
Bids the vast sea her wide dominion own :
Tempestuous storms her mighty pow'rs define,
As waves successive roll from line to line.
Her chief desire is, by intrinsic worth,
To make her isle the centre of the earth ;
And, through her genius, industry, and art,
To ev'ry land her varied stores impart.

The Swiss, who loves the alpine rocks to climb,
'Midst glaciers and eternal snows sublime,
Scorns all the dangers, which surround his feet,
And drags the chamois from its last retreat ;
Where, rais'd to winter's European home,
He views, beneath the cataract's white foam,
Glen, precipice, and gulf, and distant dales,
And mighty snow-drifts sweeping o'er the vales ;
Then the bright lakes of ev'ry form and size,
The banks adorn'd in nature's thousand dyes,
Th' enamel'd meads, the eagle-haunts unknown,
The forests, rivers, and the dells o'er-grown.
The African, who drinks of Niger's stream,
Of Zaire and Gambia's source, where reptiles teem,
And lives, unfetter'd in the torrid zone,
Mid spicy groves, and palm-tree forests lone,

Where fanning airs and grateful vapours dense
Cool his weak frame, relax'd by heat intense,—
The African, whose sable skin in vain
Is deemed a meet excuse for slav'ry's chain ;—
E'en should he 'scape the alligator's pow'r,
That lurks conceal'd around his native bow'r,
'Tis but to fall 'neath tyrant jaws more dire,
And tortured live—and, as a slave, expire.
The soft Italian, of a beauteous land,
Where long the Cæsars rul'd with proud command,
Sees now how changed, alas, is that great name !
How faded every monument of fame !
Glad should I be if Italy could claim
The virtues, worthy of the Roman name !
But mould'ring Rome re-echoes to the waves
Millions of sons, to dark delusions slaves !

The plundering Arabs their vast deserts cross ;
And on some fertile spot, where dates and moss
Appear, or nigh some solitary pile,
Pitch the expansive tent, and rest awhile ;
When sleep suspends the loud and jocund noise,
And nought awhile their sweet repose destroys :
But ere the morn appears they start again,
And traverse, rapidly, the sandy plain,
Scarce glancing on the pyramids, so fast
They move along to 'scape the scorching blast.
The cossack, with his stalworth steed, obtains
From scanty morsel strength to brave campaigns.
The fierce New Zealander may boast of crimes,
And keen revenge for wrongs of other times.
The lively Persian, in his rich array—
The Burman, quick, vindictive, curious, gay—

Th' Amazonian, th' Indian, who resides
Near lone Cape Horn, or where Missouri glides—
E'en from the torrid to the frigid zone,—
To each, to all, Britannia's name is known !
The Briton mounts his ocean-car, and braves
The mightiest terrors of the briny waves.
He heads a fleet, and vict'ry leads the way,
And tyranny and crime his laws obey.
He sways a sceptre, truth and peace attend ;
Nations with joy acknowledge him their friend.
Ask, where does commerce, with gigantic arms,
Unrivall'd pour its variegated charms ;
Concentrating in one from all with care
Whate'er is beauteous, costly, rich, or fair ?
Your eyes, they lead to fam'd Britannia's shore,
Where freedom reigns and slav'ry's known no more.

But though the Briton loves the ocean's roar,
And fearless visits earth's remotest shore,
Yet oft is bought, with countless human lives,
The wealth, or fame, or honour, that arrives.
Ah ! who can tell the woe and misery,
That mighty storms spread o'er the restless sea,
When rocks re-echo the tumultuous cry
Of billows towering upward to the sky ;
When deaf'ning thunder joins the awful scene,
And vivid light'ning fills the void between.
As when th' impending rocks, detach'd, descend
To yawning glens, that 'neath their scope extend ;
Or in the sea profound are widely hurl'd,
To prove the unfathom'd bowels of the world ;
So wat'ry mountains from their sources flow,
And, curling, plunge to fill the gulfs below ;

The screaming gulls through liquid columns dart,
And howling winds a boundless force impart ;
Wide o'er the main the waves their course pursue,
As when earth nought but wat'ry tumult knew,
When God incens'd bade justice strike the blow,
And drown the race that would not mercy know.
Oft in the North confusion thus prevails,
And dire calamities attend the gales.
Though hope should gild the ship's majestic prow,
And bright successes new incentives show ;
Though man undaunted bid oblivion take
And hide the facts that would his projects shake ;
Though richest treasures arctic dangers shroud,
And prospects new the sea with vessels crowd :
E'en yon fair ship, the glory of its crew,
Renown'd for speed, and comely to the view,

Though, like a queen, she move along the main.
May founder yet, and ne'er return again !
Hear, how they cheer her, as she quits the port,
And sails with stateliness beyond the fort.
See on the pier a little group remains
To bid adieu to those the ship contains,
With heartfelt sorrow, such as none can tell,
Save those, who know and take a last farewell.
O spurn not then the tim'rous female sigh,
Or manly tear, that drops from vet'ran eye,
'Tis sweet to see, when gliding from the shore,
The hand that true affection waves once more.

The months, in quick succession, roll away,
And homeward bound, the vessel speeds her way,

When lo! the water's unexpected rage,
And foaming surges, all their pow'rs engage.
The western sea with fury mounts on high,
And northern gales proclaim new dangers nigh.
Now rides the ship before the winds, that groan ;
Close reef'd the top sails or bare poles alone.
The captain cheers his men through ev'ry blast,
And aids them to cut down the shatter'd mast.
The anxious sailor waits the coming morn,
And clings to hope 'mid troubles most forlorn :
He strains his weari'd eyes through twilight sun,
And fears his ship on some dire reef should run,
And short he draws th' invigorating breath,—
In each descent he views depicted death ;
The rising wave he dreads will rive in twain
The fragile wreck, yet floating on the main ;

And 'mid the awful scene to heav'n he sighs,
And thus a prayer in fault'ring accents tries :—
“ O God of oceans! look in mercy down!
“ O Pow'r supreme, avert death's ghastly frown!
“ And let thy goodness, gracious heav'n! be seen
“ In granting help through this heart-rending scene.
“ O Thou! who walk'd upon the raging sea,
“ And felt for others tender sympathy,
“ Outstretch thine arm to save us from despair,
“ And hear, O God! a dying sailor's pray'r!
“ O grant forgiveness! O dispel the gloom!
“ And now preserve us from a yawning tomb.
“ If not, O God! resign'd, for those I pray,
“ Dearer than self, from whom I'm snatched away:
“ The mother and her tender babes defend,
“ Who, soon bereav'd, shall mourn a father's end.

“ Do thou the widow cheer in her distress !
“ Be thou a father to the fatherless ;
“ And grant, that on eternity’s vast shore,
“ In heav’n we all may meet to part no more.”

The hoary ocean tempest, overcast,
Howls wilder still, with each increasing blast ;
The seamen mark the wat’ry mountain break,
And blight the last recourse which they could make,
One gasping pang, one dying woe, they drink,
As with their mates and found’ring bark they sink.
Or, p’rhaps, a sole survivor to the last
Struggles for life, and grasps the floating mast ;
Now high—now low—borne onward by the wave,
He hangs suspended o’er his shipmates’ grave.

No longer now his ship is riding there,
And he has almost yielded to despair,
When hope emits an unexpected ray,
From shores auspicious (midst the ocean's sway),
On which, although exhausted, he is cast ;
Heav'n bids him live!—Be grateful for the past.
With thankfulnes he treads the welcome shore,
And hopes to see his native land once more !



CANTO IV.



THE GREENLAND MINSTREJ.



CAPE SEARLE, A REMARKABLE PROMONTORY OF NORTH AMERICA.
IN DAVIS'S STRAITS.

Here rugged capes, precipitous and steep,
Form mighty bulwarks to the foaming deep.

Canto 1, page, 4.

THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.

CANTO IV.

GREAT are the terrors which surround the pole,
Dread the alarms that rack the native's soul.
Though, through the summer, life and lights should
 stay,
And fill the land with one enchanting day,
Yet Winter brings both danger and distress,
Peculiar to this clime of frigidness !
And, were it not for sweet contentment's pow'r,
Whose balm is plenteous in the adverse hour,

E'er would the Greenlander be fill'd with cares,
So great the perils he with patience bears.
The polar tribes, through storms of beating snow,
On frozen shores, in fragile sledges go.
The faithful dogs their strength successful yield,
Round rugged capes or smooter icy field ;
And when they move along the mountain side,
They turn or stop obedient to their guide.
Or when the drifting snow augments their fear,
They press their onward course e're night appear.
When hurricanes on whirlwind pinions rove,
And the appalling tempests rage above,
They then conspire to save the watchful bands,
And drag them safe o'er ice or treach'rous strands.
Or if the weary Greenland clan should stay,
By hunger bound or dangers of the way,

They raise a village on some favour'd shore,
Or inland plain, untravers'd p'rhaps before.
Smooth slabs of hard translucent ice they form,
And quickly build a covert from the storm.
Some rocky ridge, or mound, or mountain steep,
A shelter yields from blasts, that southward sweep.
So polar natives winter-houses rear,
And thus draw comforts from an icy sphere.
While industry her rich reward reveals,
And owns the heart, that her kind influence feels ;
The Esquimaux view, with approving smile,
Their homes arrang'd in Greenland's native style ;
The household stock of valu'd comforts here,
With implements of fir and ivory near ;
Harpoons and lances, made with greatest care
To pierce the walrus, seal, or timid hare ;

The mossy wick on rocky lamps they place,
And smoky fumes the new-built walls deface.
O'er half the hut thick polar skins are spread,
Affording to the clan one common bed.
Their faithful dogs the narrow entrance court,
And crave, from time to time, a mean support.
In northern lands for months the winter stays,
And is one endless night, one gloomy maze.
The sun retiring bids the frigid pow'r
Nip the soft herb, and freeze the humid show'r,
Congeal cascades, and lock in iron fold,
The various lakes which inland regions hold;
Stop with strong grasp the winding river's course,
And e'en impede the roaring billow's force;
With frigid arms embrace the ice-bergs vast,
And chain them to the rocks and mountains fast,

Cementing nature in one complex whole
Of isles, seas, glaciers, round the northern pole !
Then too lone silence quits her summer grot
To rove again o'er each sequester'd spot ;
Dread empress of these icy realms confest,
Whose frightful presence all alike detest.
For then comes want, keen monster of distress,
Than whom no deadlier foe these clans possess.
Reduc'd by hunger to the lowest stage,
The native strives successful to engage
His utmost skill and well-tried gifts combin'd,
Though late so fruitless all his pow'rs conjoin'd.
At last an unexpected source appears,
To meet awhile his wants and drown his fears :
All earthly blessings the priz'd seal provides,¹²
Clothing, and fire, and food for them besides.

But winter frowns full oft with heedless stare,
And deals of woe to him a heavy share :
To cold and hunger he becomes a prey,
And death his frail existence bears away.
Five summers scarce have Greenland regions cheer'd,
Since inland-bound a band of Britons steer'd.
The noontide splendour of th' unsetting sun,
Which then his beaut'ous course had just begun,
The various seas, to natives only known,
And clust'ring islands, crown'd th' inviting zone.
Their little bark with food th' advent'urers stor'd,
And, thus equipp'd, the northern wilds explor'd.
Some shores of rugged form they passed by,
And isles, with inland peaks that touched the sky,
A mountain near, with frigid cov'ring bright,
As from a mirror, threw a dazzling light.

From cloud-capt summits, wrapt in melting snow,
The limpid fountains seem'd from heav'n to flow;
And headlands, like a mighty fortress, stood
With rocky battlements, that dipp'd the flood,
Bound round with terraces of icebergs pure,
On which th' astonish'd strangers pass'd secure ;
While noisy waves, 'mong craggy rocks below,
In rumbling sounds their restless fury show.
See now before them spread an icy plain,
Formed to obstruct their passage o'er the main,
On which they launch their boat, and by vast strength
Impel it forward to the distant length.
Success their hearts reanimates anew,
Afresh they dip the oars, their course pursue ;
And winged tribes to neighb'ring isles drew near,
As if the ev'ning shades would soon appear.

For though this land awhile no darkness knows,
Yet beasts and fowls by instinct there repose,
On icy beds the polar monsters sleep,
And countless birds frequent the rocky steep.
A mighty headland, with indented shores,
And sloping banks, by which the billow roars,
Present attractions to the vent'rous band,
That seek a suited spot whereon to land.
O'er hill and dale they rove, and often climb
The mountain side to view the scene sublime;
So grand and boundless in the wild extent,
That it appears to them a continent.
Ere long they reach a ravine deep and vast,
With shelving rocks of adamantine cast,
And granite cliffs, with garnets studded o'er,
And various beauties, ne'er observ'd before :

With due precaution they consult awhile,
And cautiously attempt the steep defile ;
And when beholding from beneath, half spent,
Themselves entomb'd in earth's appalling rent,
They gaze with wonder on the scene display'd
Of striking grandeurs nature's God had made.
A sloping plain, grown o'er with herb, they reach,
And far beneath they spy the shelving beach ;
And down the cliff, which in disorder ends,
A cataract with deaf'ning roar descends ;
Its bursting waters falling from above,
Tumult'ous roll, and, foaming, onward move ;
Until beneath th' expansive icy floor,
They sink to silence from their dismal roar.
The trav'lers now an inland strait explore,
Where countless icebergs line the verdant shore,

And masses huge on greater masses stand,
Objects of int'rest to th' exploring band.
The sun seem'd form'd alone this scene to aid,
Of beauteous sapphires in perfection laid,
Of em'rals rich, and di'monds pure the dress,
A glorious scene of arctic loveliness !
Few had before these Greenland vallies trod,
And thus beheld the mighty works of God.
With hearts elated they pursue their way,
Nor clouds, nor fogs, impede the solar ray.
When, lo ! they see not far th' abode of man,
The habitation of some native clan :
A bay alone, outspread with ice and snow,
Obstructs the path by which they fain would go.
The beauteous snow-bird gently soars on high,
And bids them o'er the ice a passage try.

They hasten on, 'midst boundless hopes and fears,
And gain the land on which the house appears :
Then, through a swampy and a barren soil,
They reach the object of their anxious toil.
But, lo ! no Greenlanders exulting stand,
To greet with smiles and signs th' approaching band ;
The sledge and implements lie scatter'd near,
With weapons and canoes, and skins of deer.
And, ah ! all cold and lifeless on the ground,
Eight Esquimaux within their hut were found !
An aged father lay with wrinkled head,
And locks as white as snow, that strew'd his bed ;
A mother, scarcely cover'd, leant and prest
With circling arms her infant to her breast ;
The marble cherub clasp'd its parent's neck,
And death seem'd foil'd its fond embrace to check.

Well might they gaze with horror on the scene :
No tongue could tell the suff'rings that had been,
For here the clan, all struggling to the last,
Perish'd amidst the northern winter's blast.
As fled th' immortal soul, each body froze,
And nature shudder'd at these arctic woes,
For here the place they rais'd for winter's home,
Became their common grave—their icy tomb !

CANTO V.



THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.



AN INLAND SCENE, TAKEN NEAR THE FROE ISLANDS.

And Nature, wrapt in one vast frigid dress,
Glories in frightful, wildest, barrenness !

THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.

—

CANTO V.

—

THE arctic pole, e'en to Spitzbergen's shore,
From Greenland's wild to hilly Labrador,
The tribes and nations, with the various lands,
And lakes, and seas, America commands.
The heav'nly beauties and earth's sweets combin'd,
Attract and please the philosophic mind.
'Tis here the needle varies from the pole,
And glacier-heaps to distant regions roll.

The snows a hundred crystal wonders show,
And dwarfish herbage paints the vales below.
The sportive rein-deer bounds o'er verdant meads,
And with its silken coat the musk-ox feeds.
The arctic foxes prowl along the shore,
And hungry bears send forth a hideous roar,
The wild fowl build, and white hares make their bed,
+ 'Mong willow banks and plains with grass o'erspread.
The narvals gambol in their peaceful haunts¹³
With mighty whales, companions of their wants!
Here on ice-peak the burgomaster stands,
And seals disport in num'rous social bands.¹⁴
+ The arctic swallows make their stay awhile,¹⁵
Their graceful forms bedeck the floating isle.
Bright the Aurora Borealis plays,¹⁶
X And far and near its magic pow'r displays.

Here too the sun, and moon, and planets bright,
To charm the polar world their rays unite ;
Nor are there wanting, in this frigid zone,
Those who delight to call these lands their own ;
Who are attach'd, by nature's strongest tie,
And if estrang'd will pine away and die.

Though here no bards in flowing verse recount
The mighty dangers Greenlanders surmount,
Yet many a native chief with pride displays
His nation's rise, and earns his meed of praise ;
Oft tells the deeds, that cause the hero's name
From tribe to tribe to spread its wond'rous fame.

Scarce had the orb of day begun to rise,
And leave th' horizon rob'd in crimson dyes,

When in his kayak, on the sea alone,
An Uskee chief fled from the southern zone.
He was a wand'rer in his frail canoe,—
A prey to sorrow such as visits few :
Full many a league he cruis'd along the shore,
Sighing for dearest relatives no more.
He sped his lonesome way to colder lands,
Sought icebergs rather than th' inviting sands :
One only hope remain'd ; and that, to find
A happy tribe of his own peaceful kind.
Thus many a night and weary day he strove
To paddle northward to some friendly cove.
At length a native clan upon the shore
Implored him to exert one effort more ;
And what he long'd for now broke on his sight,
His trembling heart exulted with delight !

The natives bade him welcome to their shore,
And chose for him the choicest of their store.
His wasted frame and countenance aghast
Proclaimed the sad disasters he had past.
When he had rested, they desired to know
The cause of all his bitterness of woe,
Why he so often look'd with dread behind,
And what the sorrow that opprest his mind?
They first direct him to a mossy seat,
Then hear him thus his mournful tale repeat :—

“My name is Korton—eastern lands my home,
“Where my dear parents were content to roam :
“Their love for me they often would declare,
“And watch'd my youthful steps with anxious care.

“ Though young, I learnt to urge the swift canoe,
“ And dart the lance, and heavy weapons true.
“ The chase appeared my most successful choice ;
“ And soon the trusty dogs obey’d my voice.
“ I well remember how, with great surprise,
“ I first beheld above the surface rise
“ The mighty whale, by strongest impulse driv’n,
“ And aqueous columns spouting high to Heav’n.
“ Its giant back was as an island spread ;
“ One third its size appear’d to form its head :
“ I even trembled, when the billows fled,
“ As if by winds and howling tempest sped :
“ It rais’d its bulky form, then lash’d the sea,
“ Majestic darting from the Isle and me.

“ With pride I urg’d my new kayak along,
“ Skimm’d o’er the waves, and sang the fisher’s song.
“ Fill’d with delight from sweet contentment’s pow’r,
“ ’Mid Greenland’s isles I pass’d the youthful hour :
“ Sometimes the sea presented, far and wide,
“ A glassy surface, and th’ auspicious tide
“ As gently flow’d to bear us to those haunts,
“ Where we might hunt for food to soothe our wants.
“ Scarce twenty summers on my head had shone,
“ When I one morn was wand’ring forth alone ;
“ The islands, lichen-clad, though short the day,
“ Beam’d with the unobstructed solar ray :
“ And nature seemed as beauteous, as we know,
“ Our matchless country is in summer’s glow.
“ From hunt successful I was hast’ning back,
“ And paddling onward in my light kayak,

- “ A fog extensive spread on every side,
“ And suddenly obscured my way ;—the tide
“ Then ebbing join’d the sun’s departing light,
“ To bid me seek a shelter for the night.
“ While thus perplex’d, and doubting what to do,
“ The distant breakers soon appear’d in view :
“ Thither I bent my way, and cruis’d the shore,
“ And shouted oft between the stormy roar.
“ At last when almost spent, I saw on high
“ A glimm’ring light, and dogs proclaim’d friends
nigh.
“ With kindness they received me, and exprest
“ Their wish to know what news ? which sea was
best ?
“ Where I procured my prize ? and thus much more
“ Of interrogat’ry unsolv’d before.

“ I then related, how I lately past
“ Whole nights expos’d to the inclement blast ;
“ How walruses had been by me alone
“ Detain’d, till lanc’d they died without a groan ;
“ How whales for months had been my only food ;
“ How more than thrice I with my dogs pursu’d
“ A monstrous bear with cubs o’er ice and land,
“ Compell’d her to engage at my command,—
“ How I with courage quench’d her rage and foam,
“ The contest gain’d, and dragg’d the monsters home ;
“ How I pursued the bounding deer inland,¹⁸
“ And led success with my experienced hand ;
“ How oft in ambush, near the rocky height,
“ I numbers slew, though in their speediest flight.
“ While thus reciting my achievements o’er,
“ Amusing those I ne’er had seen before,

- “ A list’ning female caught my wand’ring eye,
“ And new delight I felt, when she was nigh.
“ Ullenak seem’d enraptur’d with my tale,
“ With her I ceased my dangers to bewail :
“ The storms we view’d as omens most divine,
“ And love soon triumph’d o’er her heart and mine.
“ O happy union, period sweet of life,
“ In which Ullenak fair became my wife !
“ Had I contentment known, nor anxious felt
“ To see those lands, where native Indian dwelt,
“ I might have now been happy ; but, alas !
“ To other islands I desir’d to pass.
“ Yes ! I was young, and formed each hopeful plan,
“ And soon became the hero of the clan,
“ Was fam’d for sledge, and dogs, and strong canoe,
“ A summer tent, and winter dwelling too,

“ And all the streamer of my shalop knew.

“ Thus peace domestic crown'd my passing life,
“ And virtues rare endowed my faithful wife ;
“ And joys anew were added on that day
“ Our eldest son was born to cheer our way.
“ One morn, my friend, when winter's frigid hold
“ Envelop'd polar lands with piercing cold ;
“ A hideous bear, of dreadful pow'r and form,¹⁹ ²⁰
“ Sought out my uskee's shelter from the storm,
“ And prowl'd around, (while all within bespoke
“ Feelings unconcious of th' impending stroke).
“ Then rushing forward, grasp'd my infant child,
“ And bore him onward through the snowy wild.
“ I soon call'd forth my dogs, with anxious heart,
“ Arrang'd my lances and prepar'd the dart.

- “ With haste I sought the plund’rer’s cruel way,
“ To rescue from his grasp the tender prey.
“ Th’ aurora granted too her friendly rays,
“ And brighten’d, far and wide, the gloomy maze ;
“ The howling dogs, aware of danger near,
“ Pursu’d with ardour, not unmix’d with fear.
“ Across the plains I urg’d them to the fight,
“ With deep distress I view’d th’ affecting sight.
“ To infant shrieks the echoing rocks replied,
“ And fondness more than nat’ral force supplied.
“ I quickly to the monstrous beast drew near,
“ Then stopp’d the savage thief: uprais’d my spear ;
“ Began the contest with the mighty foe,
“ Which sprang, retir’d, and dealt the pond’rous
 blow ;
“ With care I shun’d the monster’s fatal grasp,
“ Evaded dexterously the threat’ning clasp ;

“ Then pierc’d its vitals ; made him yield his breath,
“ And our dear babe I snatch’d from instant death.

“ While living thus in that too well-known spot,
“ Where first I took Ullenak to my cot ;
“ Where nature feels the exigence of heat,
“ And oft’ner pelting storms and wild winds beat ;
“ Where rocky isles possess no fertile soil,
“ Yet where delight was our’s, though great our toil,
“ A tribe approach’d our happy home, and found
“ True hospitality their steps surround ;
“ Such always shown by our dear friendly race,
“ Wherever living on earth’s chequer’d face.
“ One aged chief, much wiser than the rest,
“ My questions answer’d, and me thus addrest ;—

“ ‘ Korton, you ask of me, what I may know,
“ ‘ Concerning yonder distant lands below ;
“ ‘ Of num’rous islands, and of countries far
“ ‘ Northward, or westward, or where’er they are :—
“ ‘ Now I have wander’d up and down our clime,
“ ‘ And liv’d to see a great extent of time.

“ ‘ These regions, to the pole are rob’d in snow ;
“ ‘ But, if you wish of beauteous lands to know,
“ ‘ Then to America you e’en must go
“ ‘ Withal prepared to brave the stormy sea,
“ ‘ Choosing, when ice shall wide extended be ;
“ ‘ And half-way o’er this mighty strait you’ll see
“ ‘ An iceberg, grounded on the hidden rocks,
“ ‘ Proof to the whirlwind and the tempest’s shocks.

“ ‘ I paddled round it, though so aged grown,
“ ‘ And saw with pleasure, hitherto unknown,
“ ‘ The bays, the inlets, the projecting capes,
“ ‘ The giant walls, the heights of various shapes,
“ ‘ The smooth and ragged slopes that touch’d the
 sea,

“ ‘ And caverns deep, in which I fear’d to be !
“ ‘ Many a day it took me to explore
“ ‘ That mighty fragment of our polar store :
“ ‘ And Korton, there are found, on ev’ry side,
“ ‘ Whole fields of ice, detain’d by this your guide ;
“ ‘ Near which you may procure with ease vast stores
“ ‘ Of food from birds and beasts that throng those
 shores.

“ ‘ Then southward let your way from thence incline,
“ ‘ The continent, ere long, you shall define.

“ ‘ There in the south luxuriant verdure grows,
“ ‘ And forest wilds their sylvan sweets disclose.
“ ‘ I wander’d o’er them oft in times of yore,
“ ‘ And felt such joy, unknown to me before.
“ ‘ And now that period of my life appears
“ ‘ Most fraught with comforts, and less fill’d with
fears.

“ ‘ Your fond desire to know where I have been,
“ ‘ What countries in my travels I have seen,
“ ‘ Inspires me with a wish to teach you more,
“ ‘ And show you, Korton, what events before
“ ‘ My time occur’d. Few can so clearly tell
“ ‘ The wond’rous things which once our lands
befel :

“ ‘ But since the coming shades around prevail,
“ ‘ Till morning’s dawn will I reserve the tale.’

“ —The night roll'd onward; all was soft repose,
“ And I had, ere my aged friend arose,
“ From hunt successful come. Ullenak fair
“ Prepared the feast, and social joy was there.

“ I all impatience, ask'd my friend to walk,
“ Where undisturb'd we might with freedom talk;
“ A sloping bank, with dwarfy willow green,
“ Through which a rippling rivulet was seen,
“ Darting and glist'ning in the cloudless glare
“ Of solar rays, which seem concenter'd there,
“ Bade us recline, and I attentive heard,
“ My friend relate th' events he had deferr'd :—
“ ‘ You ask me, Korton, of the drear defiles,
“ ‘ Connected with these Greenland chain of isles,

“ ‘ Where in my youth I found so much delight,
“ ‘ And lov’d to rove o’er rocky inland height,
“ ‘ Or verdant plains, where silken grass is found,
“ ‘ And where the heath-flowers decorate the ground ;
“ ‘ And many an evergreen and plant appears,
“ ‘ And beauteous vegetation nature cheers.
“ ‘ And as the poppy, ready to expand,
“ ‘ Luxuriant thrives in our unequall’d land,
“ ‘ So I appear’d in prime and vigour too,
“ ‘ Ready to burst on scenes of manhood new,
“ ‘ When my respected sire, with hoary head,
“ ‘ And trembling voice, thus to me gravely said :
“ ‘ Far to the south, where eastern shores exist,
“ ‘ Where cape Farewell is ever wrapt in mist,
“ ‘ Your fathers liv’d in joy and comfort rare,
“ ‘ The lands were fertile, and serene the air,

“ ‘ When, lo ! a ship approached the harbour fast,
“ ‘ And there did others soon their anchors cast,
“ ‘ Their crews Norwegians, who sought out with
care,
“ ‘ A favour’d spot, near plains of verdure fair.
“ ‘ And soon they fram’d the rough unweildy stone,
“ ‘ And houses built of shape to us unknown ;
“ ‘ And in the centre, mightier still on high,
“ ‘ A spacious temple pointed to the sky,
“ ‘ In which none dwelt, but all would oft repair,
“ ‘ At certain times, to sing and worship there. !
“ ‘ E’en like the progress of that iceberg vast,
“ ‘ This town in magnitude augmented fast.
“ ‘ The country round assum’d another form,
“ ‘ And plains and hills protected from the storm,
“ ‘ Were cultivated to receive the seeds,

“ ‘ And seem’d, though fraught with food, like
grassy meads;

“ ‘ And other settlers came, and fill’d the land,

“ ‘ And built new towns, more lofty still and grand :

“ ‘ Their ships set sail and disappeared apace,

“ ‘ And brought fresh stores from some far distant
place !

“ ‘ Yea wond’rous things and curious arts were
known,

“ ‘ Within the towns, that flourish’d in our zone.

“ ‘ But they soon drove our fathers from the shore,

“ ‘ Or made them give them of our scanty store.

“ ‘ Our ancestors then left their native strands,

“ ‘ And mighty towns and cultivated lands.

“ ‘ They long’d to hunt, where’er they pleas’d to stay,

“ ‘ Unhinder’d and uncheck’d by night or day.

“ ‘ The joy and sweets that liberty conveys,
“ ‘ The fond delights a wand’ring life displays,
“ ‘ Our noble parents knew, and proudly felt,
“ ‘ And northward died, where glaciers never melt.
“ ‘ And since that period none could tell me more,
“ ‘ Of these vast towns, renown’d in days of yore.

“ ‘ Thus well inform’d, we soon began to choose
“ ‘ Those things, most fitted for our southern cruise.
“ ‘ And the moon’s horns had scarce began to fill,
“ ‘ When this advice confirm’d my bias’d will ;
“ ‘ And when her form complete had just declin’d,
“ ‘ There from the east arose a favour’d wind.
“ ‘ All nature seem’d serene, as now you see
“ ‘ The wide expanse around appears to be.

“ We started then with feelings blithe and new,
“ ‘ And soon these Greenland shores were lost to view.
“ ‘ Full twice five leagues we travers’d on that day,
“ ‘ Nor halted, till the night obscur’d the way.
“ ‘ And on the fifth of these our toilsome days,
“ ‘ When placid evening had outspread its rays,
“ ‘ I saw th’ horizon fill’d with plains of snow,
“ ‘ And beaut’ous peaks extended high and low.
“ ‘ The whole reflected tints of richest dye,
“ ‘ To which elated we began to ply ;
“ ‘ Nor can I half describe, with what delight
“ ‘ We saw the iceberg now appear in sight:
“ ‘ Its mighty form and size our doubts dispell’d,
“ ‘ The half-way resting place we then beheld.
“ ‘ With sweet contentment we prepar’d for rest,
“ ‘ And quick our tent, with all its comforts blest,

“ ‘ Was pitch’d upon the most propitious spot ;
“ ‘ Thus hitherto success had crown’d our lot.’
“ ‘ But oh what gloom the early morn disclos’d !
“ ‘ When we arose in peace, as we suppos’d,
“ ‘ Lo we discover’d that the icy sheet,
“ ‘ On which we planted our nocturnal seat,
“ ‘ Was southward driv’n by currents unobserv’d,
“ ‘ And miles from our intended pathway swerv’d.
“ ‘ While moving o’er the treach’rous fields, we found
“ ‘ No ease, till clear of such perfidious ground.

“ ‘ I had in youth been told the wond’rous tales
“ ‘ Of men, who came with ships to catch the whales.
“ ‘ Whose language, manners, and exalted skill,
“ ‘ Would oft my mind with great amazement fill.

- “ ‘ And here to windward, beating ’gainst the tide,
“ ‘ I first observ’d a mighty object glide :
“ ‘ And from the bulky hull the masts rose high,
“ ‘ Secure, though tow’ring to the lofty sky.
“ ‘ On them the sails and yards were widely plac’d,
“ ‘ And ropes on either side were tightly brac’d.
“ ‘ More like the whale, it sail’d upon the sea,
“ ‘ And more majestic it appear’d to me.
“ ‘ Ullenak told me of the treach’rous crimes
“ ‘ Of strangers, such as these in ancient times,—
“ ‘ Of unsuspecting Esquimaux decoy’d
“ ‘ On board, and then in foreign lands destroy’d.
“ ‘ She told me of the sorrow and despair,
“ ‘ A young and tender wife was doom’d to share,
“ ‘ When of her partner robb’d, her brain was fir’d,
“ ‘ And with her babe on icebergs cold expir’d ;

“ ‘ And how the rocks were often said to sigh,
“ ‘ And echo forth her lamentable cry.
“ ‘ E’en when the winds in howling fury past,
“ ‘ ’Twas said her groans were heard in ev’ry blast.

“ ‘ I own’d, that all Ullenak told was true,
“ ‘ And by tradition well supported too.
“ ‘ But then I told her later years display’d
“ ‘ No crime so black, nor e’en of half its shade :
“ ‘ While friendly actions, num’rous as the sands,
“ ‘ Or bounding deer, that feed on polar lands,
“ ‘ Full oft occur’d, and clans were known to tell
“ ‘ Of countless facts, that prov’d their friendship well.
“ ‘ And many a whale, half kill’d, escap’d each year,
“ ‘ And form’d a boon for natives far and near ;

“ ‘ And I observ’d, still more, what curious things
“ ‘ Were brought by barks, like this, with eagle wings.

“ ‘ As nearer to the mighty ship we came,
“ ‘ An inward pleasure thrill’d my anxious frame.
“ ‘ I saw full well the folly of my fear,
“ ‘ And friendly feelings bade it disappear.
“ ‘ Amaz’d, we look’d upon the pond’rous sight,
“ ‘ And felt new cause of wonder and delight.
“ ‘ Sometimes awhile we near the ice would stay,
“ ‘ And e’en diverg’d a little from our way.
“ ‘ It was a grand and marv’lous thing, indeed,
“ ‘ As it appear’d, from mists deceptive freed,
“ ‘ Which oft uplift, depress, transform, and change
“ ‘ The distant objects, and their form derange.

“ ‘The strangers saw us, and, with one accord,
“ ‘Invited us to go to them on board.
“ ‘We gave consent, and reach’d the ship with ease,
“ ‘And every thing we saw conspir’d to please.
“ ‘They spake to us in strange and curious speech,
“ ‘But signs alone were understood by each.
“ ‘I found them friendly, and without disguise,
“ ‘A valiant race, of noble form and size:
“ ‘Yet from the wisdom, shown by those on board,
“ ‘I could not judge what charms their homes afford.
“ ‘We tarried with them, for, with joy, we found,
“ ‘They were, like us, to western countries bound.
“ ‘As kind they were as Greenlanders could be;
“ ‘And many useful things they gave to me.
“ ‘We were amazed to see the sailors flock,²³
“ ‘To view the iceberg’s wild convulsive shock.

“ ‘ They stood alarm’d ; they felt no little fear,
“ ‘ When two such foes approach’d with fury near.
“ ‘ Still more, when they, in shatt’ring contract
 driv’n,
“ ‘ Hurl’d masses off from heights, to atoms riv’n :
“ ‘ The ship of each tremendous jar partook,
“ ‘ And roll’d and pitch’d, as though the earth had
 shook ;
“ ‘ But soon they saw with joy the contest o’er,
“ ‘ And all subside to calmness, as before.

“ ‘ One night, the moon on ocean’s angry bed
“ ‘ But faintly her retiring light outspread.
“ ‘ Th’ Aurora Borealis wildly shone ; ²⁴
“ ‘ As lightning, when the storm is nearly done.’

“ ‘ Its sparkling blue and purple rays were seen
“ ‘ Far north, and nearer of a brilliant green ;
“ ‘ And nature too had hail’d the glitt’ring train,
“ ‘ Of starry lights, reflected on the main.
“ ‘ When early morn th’ horizon ting’d with rays,
“ ‘ And solar beams dispers’d the gather’d haze,
“ ‘ Some fleeting clouds (which with nocturnal light
“ ‘ Had lately shone) were edg’d with shining white,
“ ‘ And bade all nature hail the orb of day,
“ ‘ As bursting forth it shone with lustrous ray.
“ ‘ ’Twas thus, as all things glitter’d on the sea,
“ ‘ The distant line convey’d a thought to me,
“ ‘ That those faint shadows were the western lands
“ ‘ We sought; o’er-joy’d I lifted up my hands,
“ ‘ And led the sailors to discern the shade :
“ ‘ They soon confirm’d the grand discov’ry made.

“ ‘ On deck Ullenak with the strangers stood,
“ ‘ And ev’ry eye the growing object view’d,
“ ‘ The shores increas’d to our enraptur’d sight,
“ ‘ Unfolding bays and rocks of ev’ry height:
“ ‘ Yea, all the charms that e’er our lands possess,
“ ‘ Upon those lofty mountains seem’d to rest.
“ ‘ Soon under the inviting cliffs we sail’d,
“ ‘ And sloping strands, and countless islands hail’d.
“ ‘ Thus, ruled by expectation’s sanguine flame,
“ ‘ And picturing future scenes of bliss and fame,
“ ‘ We parted with our happy Albion friends,
“ ‘ Nor could we for their kindness make amends.
“ ‘ They flock’d around, and I remember well
“ ‘ That none forgot to say to us farewell.
“ ‘ E’en some the rigging climb’d, to see which shore
“ ‘ I chose to land my new and varied store.

“ ‘ It pleas’d me much to mark the smiling look
“ ‘ Of friendship which each sailor’s face partook :
“ ‘ And having reach’d at last the western isles,
“ ‘ We courted shelving lands, where plenty smiles.
“ ‘ There the majestic eagle soars on high,
“ ‘ Almost beyond the sight of mortal eye,
“ ‘ And beaut’ous snow birds, bright’ning as they go,
“ ‘ Look whiter than the clouds or driven snow.
“ ‘ To see and learn of unknown seas and lands,
“ ‘ Such as a tow’ring height alone commands,
“ ‘ I sought the summit of a mountain near,
“ ‘ Which rais’d itself in awful grandeur there :
“ ‘ And on th’ horizon saw glide out of sight,
“ ‘ The friendly ship we left the previous night ;
“ ‘ And beating—swelling, waves, with tuneful roar,
“ ‘ And dewy spray, oft kiss’d my lonely shore ;

- “ ‘ While inland plains inviting, ting’d with green,
“ ‘ Bound by the white-bleach’d mountain range,
were seen :
- “ ‘ Yet, ’neath this lofty and commanding spot,
“ ‘ Was nought so lovely as my humble cot.
“ ‘ I led Ullenak to a place secure,
“ ‘ Near which the sea’s quiescent charms allure,
“ ‘ I bade her come, my dearest earthly friend,
“ ‘ And view the foaming cataract descend.
“ ‘ I lov’d to hear her voice blend with the
breeze,
“ ‘ That sweeps the surface of the northern seas.
“ ‘ And when in dangers, hunting all the day,
“ ‘ I knew she felt my absence and delay.
“ ‘ The smiling face, and unremitting care,
“ ‘ And fond endearments, tend’rest love declare ;

- “ ‘ And all my toil and labour was repaid,
“ ‘ When at her feet the deer or seal was laid.
“ ‘ Here basking in the sun, near us, we re found
“ ‘ Whole herds of beauteous narvals, diving round ;
“ ‘ Their perfect form, and shining whiten’d skins,
“ ‘ Contrasted finely with their sable fins.
“ ‘ Sometimes inclin’d, above the water rose
“ ‘ Their horns, like spears, when fierce contending foes
“ ‘ In hostile movements brandish or oppose ;
“ ‘ Or else we saw them on the waves repose,
“ ‘ And then again spontaneously retain
“ ‘ Their horns erect, and furious battles feign.

“ ‘ I here grew rich, and few could show so strong
“ ‘ Or fine a team, that drew my sledge along.

“ ‘ And once, I well remember, when a friend

“ ‘ Invited me a contest to attend,^{25 26}

“ ‘ My dogs their utmost speed for leagues maintain’d,

“ ‘ And we in time our destination gain’d.

“ ‘ The drum beat loud, the partisans advanc’d,

“ ‘ And one rehears’d a satire, while he danc’d ;

“ ‘ And told the deeds to his opponent’s face,

“ ‘ Both mean and vile, deserving his disgrace,

“ ‘ With many secret faults before unknown,

“ ‘ And ceas’d mid’ praises by his party shown.

“ ‘ My friend, th’ accused, then forward came, and
show’d

“ ‘ The debts enormous his opponent ow’d ;

“ ‘ His love of vice, the actions done by night,

“ ‘ With crimes and lies, that will not bear the
light.

“ ‘ And thus disputing, hours pass’d gaily on,

“ ‘ Until my friend at last the vict’ry won.

“ ‘ But still more southward we resolv’d to go,

“ ‘ Where verdant landscapes richest colours show ;

“ ‘ Where trees, and shrubs, and herbs of varied form ,

“ ‘ Thrive in luxuriance, free from ev’ry storm.

“ ‘ Had I return’d to Greenland’s peaceful shade,

“ ‘ Ere I so far to southern countries stray’d,

“ ‘ I had been happy with a home like thine,

“ ‘ Where kindest sympathy and goodness shine.

“ ‘ And now my falt’ring tongue forbids to yield

“ ‘ The gloomy truths within my breast conceal’d.

“ ‘ Unequall’d horror fill’d th’ enchanting ground,

“ ‘ And poison’d all the sweets we there had found.

“ ‘ The summer nearly past, the moon was young,
“ ‘ And round my knees the dear fond children clung.
“ ‘ Sweet peace domestic crown’d my happy home,
“ ‘ Nor dreaded I on inland scenes to roam.
“ ‘ When, ah ! alas ! a band no pow’r could stay,²⁷
“ ‘ Of fierce red Indians, mark’d me for their prey.
“ ‘ They came upon us, and with treach’ry vile,
“ ‘ With barb’rous yells, burst from a deep defile ;
“ ‘ In bloody rage, and dire malignant hate,
“ ‘ I saw the foes my home annihilate ;
“ ‘ My dear Ullenak, and the children too,
“ ‘ With savage fierceness, uncontrol’d they slew ;
“ ‘ E’en against me their hostile band they led,
“ ‘ Who wish’d to die, yet from their fury fled.—
“ ‘ In my canoe I hastened from the shore,
“ ‘ Dyed with the blood of dearest friends no more !

“ ‘Dearer to me, than all these lands unfold,
“ ‘Are those, whom I shall now no more behold.
“ ‘Ah! could I weep, or transient comfort know,
“ ‘’T would be some solace to my poignant woe.
“ ‘My joy and peace are now for ever fled,
“ ‘And soon I too shall join the silent dead !
“ ‘That bloody war-dance ever racks my brain,
“ ‘And gloom and sadness all my powers restrain ;
“ ‘The dreary solitudes now yield relief,²⁸
“ ‘And are become companions of my grief.

“ ‘May ne’er a clan of my dear race again
“ ‘Sail o’er those seas, or near those shores remain.”

CANTO V.



THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.





INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH AT HOLSTEINBORG, IN GREENLAND.

The house of God these christian converts throng,
And hear the truth, and join the heav'nly song.

Canto 6, page 106.

THE GREENLAND MINSTREL.

CANTO VI.

THE sun in spring scarce shines on polar earth,
But longer tarries each succeeding birth :
At last his beams for weeks unchanging stay,
And northern lands enjoy one summer's day.
Winter retiring shrinks around the pole—
The seas beneath their icy cover roll ;
O'erwhelming force the frigid wastes divide,
And giant heaps are southward urged to glide.

Ice against ice a raging war maintains,
And bergs, resembling towns and moving plains,
Are forc'd on islands, and in straits confin'd,
And dash'd to atoms by vast pow'rs combin'd.
Perils to man are thickly scatter'd round ²⁹
From whirling plains of ice, in contact bound ;
And myriad fragments from creation seem'd
To have collected, and each country teem'd
With frozen waters, and the world entire
Engag'd alone in piling masses higher.
Each year revolving doleful facts declare,
Of seamen cast away, and suff'ring there :
And one poor lad, surviving to the last,
To seek for aid climb'd on the lofty mast ;
There was he frozen, and a suff'rer died,
And floated on the wreck 'fore wind and tide.

'Twas on one cloudless, pleasant day in June—
The sun had glided from his seat at noon,
And splendid, glitt'ring beams, transcendent bright,
O'er polar earth diffus'd a dazzling light ;
And beauteous nature, smiling far and wide,
Lay undisturb'd, save by the murm'ring tide,
Which serv'd to break the void, and to the height
The birds, in flocks, pursued their airy flight ;
And ships and bergs, with peaks exceeding high,
Lay on the ocean's calm immensity :
And all in one quiescent glory stood,
Heav'n, seas, and isles, proclaim'd their Author good.
The northern lands assum'd a garb, thus sweet,
And mild, and beauteous, and with life replete :
When the unsetting sun, with heat intense,
Rais'd from the ice a mighty vapour dense,

And lo ! a ship, which sail'd in all her pride,
Could not discover objects near her side.
While thus envelop'd in the spreading mist,
The captain his own ship could not assist,
Nor dare to move, while floating insecure
'Mong fields of ice, where shipwrecks oft mature.
He therefore to a floe, on safety bent,
Made fast his ship, and waited the event.
His men, fatigued by labours most severe,
Were order'd down to take refreshing cheer.
While thus engag'd he paced the deck in fear,
Dreading the dangers which might yet appear.
A rapid current, rolling from the west,
Increas'd the fears which rack'd his anxious breast :
When suddenly a dreadful icy wall
Approach'd, with sure destruction to them all.

He called all hands immediately on deck,
For soon, he saw, his ship would be a wreck.
This scarcely done, when lo ! the column broke
Upon her broadside, with tremendous stroke :
They instantly cut loose the boats, and fly
The shatter'd bark, that on the waters lie.
The mainmast, riv'n in twain within the hold,
The bowsprit, splinter'd, from the vessel roll'd.
E'en as a nut the mighty hull was crush'd—
But soon the war of elements was hush'd,
And on her beam-ends, with her sides depress'd,
She fill'd apace, of winds and waves the jest.
Forlorn the wretched crew, absorb'd in woe,
Strove to escape awhile a deadlier foe.
Quickly the fog dispers'd—o'erjoy'd they found
Refuge in vessels which were homeward bound ;

And truth declares, that those who home regained,
Faintly describe the ills those seas contained.
Oh ! ne'er shall I forget the swell that bore,
With power resistless and o'erwhelming roar,
Our ship upon a pond'rous icy mass,
Which roll'd as though 'twould 'neath our vessel pass.
The night was dark, the sea retiring fled,
The ship convuls'd lay on the icy bed ;
The captain, first in danger, led the way
To aid her, as from thence she dash'd away :
And all on board, by his example fired,
Fulfill'd each duty he from them requir'd.
And soon we clear'd the iceberg's rocky wall—
'Scap'd swift destruction which had threaten'd all.
Scarce had our hearts exulted with delight
At dangers past, on that eventful night,

When, lo ! the pumps, on trial, would not act !
The dreadful truth the stoutest minds distract.
With greatest labour they were made to play,
And work'd incessantly by night and day.
But when our efforts fail'd the cause to find,
To quit the found'ring bark we were inclined ;
One hope remain'd—to cross the strait with care,
At Holsteinborg our shatter'd ship repair.
No voice dissentient—all admire the plan,
And with new vigour to the pumps they ran.
Up helm immediately—the wind so fair
Seem'd heav'n's kind benediction to declare !
Though sev'ral ships were ready, near at hand,
Which would have borne us to our native land,
We more united to our captain grew,
Whose prudence and experience well we knew.

Ere long the eastern peaks with joy were hail'd,
And by the chart an inland course we sail'd ;
And as no one the harbour could express,
We fir'd in hope the signals of distress.
Ah ! who can tell the perils and the pain
Attending those who tempt the treach'rous main—
The dreadful fears which dangers oft disclose—
The sad incertitude the bosom knows ?
'Twas thus a dubious future rack'd each breast,
As to and fro we sought a place of rest ;
And keenest feelings, and acutest thought,
Each ling'ring, leaden, tedious moment brought.
Oh ! who can tell the joy and hope which came,
A boon from heav'n, our gratitude to claim,
When, fast approaching, braving wind and tide,
In his canoe an Esquimaux we spied ?

He was a pilot, who, with courage great,
Full eight miles paddled to descry our state.
We never half so cordially before
A native welcom'd from the arctic shore.
Thus God in mercy these our efforts blest,
And we approach'd this northern place of rest.
The rocks and hills seem'd to possess a charm,
As though they could the monster Death disarm.
We reach'd the port, escorted by a fleet
Of Greenlanders, who came our ship to meet :
Free as the air, and cheerful as the lark,
Each skimm'd the ocean in his little bark.
Oh ! that I could describe the curious scene,
The varied groups, the animation seen,
The gliding swiftness of the neat canoe,
The graceful motion of the paddles too—

The stragglers darting elegantly round,
The laugh, the shout, the echo's mingling sound,
The cheerful converse, and the curious stare,
The whole flotilla, in perfection rare !

Not far from shore, upon a rising ground,
The little town the pleasing landscape crown'd.
A fairer object cheers not polar lands,
And in the midst the church conspicuous stands :
Around, the whiten'd cottages appear,
With summer huts and winter dwellings near;
And rocks, and plains, and dales, re-echo there,
The tuneful sound inviting man to prayer.
The house of God these Christian converts throng,
And hear the truth, and join the heav'nly song.

The barb'rous, dwarfy Uskee natives died
Unpitied, and forgot by all beside,
Till the Apostle of the North appear'd,
And with the Truth this dark horizon cheer'd.
How glorious and auspicious prov'd the time
When first Egedé thought of Greenland's clime,
There to retain from ignorance and vice
The arctic savage, bred 'mid polar ice !
How great and noble was his brave design !
How fraught with impulse sacred and divine !
All dangers vanish'd, as he joyful bore
The Gospel tidings to the heathen shore.
Sustain'd, 'midst trouble and bereavement dire,
By heav'nly influence, apostolic fire,
He rais'd the banner of the cross on high,
And liv'd to see the native convert die.

Though ignorance and wretchedness were known
To fill the wanderers of the arctic zone,
Fam'd Denmark's king disdain'd not to assist,
And aid this zealous, bold philanthropist.
How sweet and beauteous is this little town!
Diffusing through the northern wilds renown,
Not only for the costly riches spread
With heav'nly radiance on the native's head,
But for kind aid in the distressing hour,
When ships, half shatter'd by the ocean's power,
Or, damag'd more by icy pressure great,
Scarce reach the harbour in their found'ring state.
The priz'd assistance cheers each anxious crew,
Whose barks repair'd, with joy their course pursue.
Where are the spots inviting to the mind,
Where clans are taught and civil comforts find?

Yet, 'midst this barren wilderness outspread,
Fair Holsteinborg uplifts its peaceful head.
Hundreds of natives hear the Saviour's name,
And mission'ries the Gospel-truths proclaim.
The pow'r of grace, which shines resplendent here,
Would make the doubts of sceptics disappear.
At other stations, too, such teachers live,
And Esquimauxs their Christian care receive.
How noble thus to feel for others' woe,
For heathen perishing 'mid ice and snow !
How pure the love that rests on Christ's command,
And gives up all to join the Mission band
Of warriors, arm'd to fight with faith sublime,
'Gainst Pagan darkness, ignorance, and crime :
Although in time they sad bereavements bear,
In heav'n a crown of righteousness they'll wear.

At Holsteinborg the aid, so much desir'd,
We then receiv'd, and all our ship requir'd :
And after num'rous kind attentions shown
On either side, we left the frigid zone,
And sail'd in safety to our native land,
Grateful for blessings polar climes command.

Would there were many Christian towns like this,
With beacons pointing to eternal bliss ;
For num'rous unknown natives draw the breath,
In darkness wrapt, expos'd to sin and death.
To them the past—the future—is involv'd
In one vast labyrinth of gloom, unsolv'd.
Oppress'd by their deteriorating clime,
They hardly feel a sense of moral crime ;

For every age o'er their contracted sight
Outspreads a mantle of impervious night;
And heathen ignorance and mental gloom
Attend at birth, and follow to the tomb.

Ah! who can show the heartfelt, touching scene,
Which northern lands present, when winter keen,
Attended by her sad and piercing train,
Unfolds the sorrows of an orphan's pain?
See in his winter-home the dying man,
The brave supporter of his numerous clan—
Behold him there, a pris'ner to disease,
No hopes immortal gloomy doubts appease!
His dying head laid on a pillow low
Of flinty rock, or frozen, bleached snow;

No peace nor comfort soothes his aching heart,
From what his wife or children may impart ;
No friend directs to Him who came to save,
And sheds eternal glory o'er the grave—
Or tells how he, who in Christ's footsteps trod,
Should rise to dwell in paradise with God !

Oh ! what a tale of horror and despair,
The heathen customs of these lands declare !
The aged parent oft is left to die
On some lone isle, expos'd to misery.
O hark ! what sounds are those, that echo there ?
What cry is that, which rends the chilling air ?
Forlorn distresses, and unbounded grief
That knows no mitigation nor relief ?

O, stay yon execrable band, that flies,
Regardless of affection's tend'rest ties ;
How can they leave, and e'en without a sigh,
Their helpless parent on the shore to die ?
Though here, in idols man does not confide,
Yet they the same benighted feelings guide.
In Greenland, as in India's scorching sand,—
Murder, from superstition, stains the land.
Behold ! the mother takes her first-born son,
Whose beauteous opening charms have just begun
To knit him stronger to his parent's heart ;
Though idols call, she feels they cannot part.
See how its little eyes flash forth with joy,
And smiles of innocence and peace destroy
All power to harm, 'till, in a pagan dream,
She drowns her infant in the sacred stream.

Oh! that my theme might prompt one generous
thought

Of real compassion for those clans untaught,
And cause more vigorous efforts to unloose
The Gordian knot of heathen gloom diffuse—
Dread gloom, that binds the future and the past,
And threatens e'en as long as time to last ;—
To cause more favour'd lands to show their love
And sense of gratitude to God above;
Who sent a Saviour, Christ, to die for all,
And break the chains encircled at the fall.
To ev'ry tribe salvation to declare,
Is Christ' s command. Then hasten, heralds,
there,
And from those regions converts shall arise,
And join redeemed hosts beyond the skies.

'Twould well repay the fleeting moments spent
In Polar lands, 'mid dangers they present ;
O may my trembling, scarce melodious, lays,
Draw forth some abler mind in after days,
Whose pow'rs transcendent and unequall'd song
Shall tell not solely what to lands belong,
But glaciers mount, with elevated soul,
And pass unhinder'd to the mystic pole;
Shall there on high, a sacred trophy rear,
And earth's Creator all shall own and fear.

The wilds of North America, unknown,
The solitudes, with lichen garb o'ergrown,
The cataract, descending from the store
Of ice exhaustless, that surmounts the shore,

Extending far and wide, with hills sublime,
That pierce the heav'ns, and scorn the power of
time—

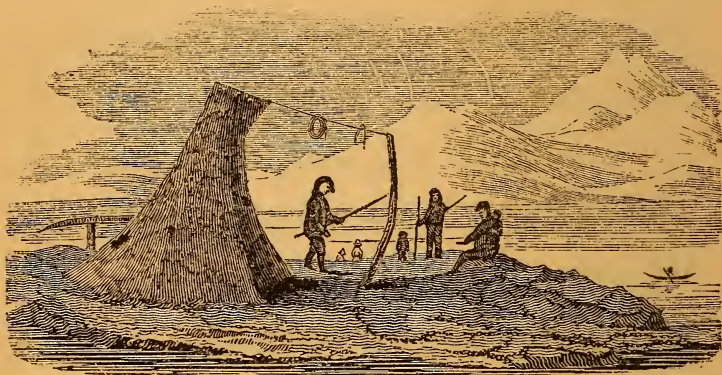
The grandly-rugged continental coasts,
Of which the Greenland native fondly boasts—
The genial summer's long-protracted ray—
The winds, that rule when tempests wildly play—
The snowy mantle, which successive thaws—
The towering iceberg, that our wonder draws,³⁶
With wide unfathom'd walls, and thickness great,
And height oppressive e'en to contemplate—³⁷
The wand'ring clans from hilly Labrador,
From Cape Farewell to the most northern
shore ;—

These claim the interest of th' observant mind,
These are the wonders I have just defin'd.

And when, uprais'd as on some eagle's wings,
I glanc'd on all the wide-spread, wondrous things
Of polar earth, I felt constrain'd to sing,—
Though few the charms that nature seem'd to bring,
The arctic beauties which lie scatter'd there,
The glorious power of nature's God declare !

O dazzling zone ! Ye rocks, unite with me,
And every tribe or nation, bond or free,
And join, ye mountains of eternal snow,
And flowers and herbs, which deck the vales below
And feather'd fowl, high soaring on the wing,
With beasts and insects, your due tribute bring,
And thou, Leviathan, like a cape outspread,
Near some vast iceberg on the em'rald bed,

Join, with the moon, the charm of polar night,
With mists and halos, and yon meteor's light;—
Nor thou, first, mightiest, orb withhold thy blaze,
But swell the throng, and sing Jehovah's praise !



THE END.

NOTES.



A VIEW OF THE CATARACT ON THE NORTH AMERICAN SIDE OF DAVIS'S STRAITS.

The cataract descending from the store
Of ice exhaustless, that surmounts the shore.

NOTES.

NOTES 1, 2, & 3.

DESCRIPTION OF GREENLAND.

“The regions in the neighbourhood of the North Pole have lately become objects of increased curiosity ; and among these regions Greenland has attracted a more than usual interest. Greenland is a high and rocky country, always covered with ice and snow (except on the sea-side, and in the bays and inlets), which never thaws nor melts away. You may judge of the height by the prospects they yield at more than twenty Norway miles distance from the shore.”

“The extensive tract of country called Greenland belongs to Denmark ; and it was under the illustrious patronage and benign support of Frederic the 10th, that Hans Egede commenced his celebrated and philanthropic christian labours among the Esquimaux nation.”

NOTE 4.

*“ A thousand years have scarcely pass'd away,
Since o'er the main Norwegians bent their way.”*

Canto 1, Page 5.

DISCOVERY OF GREENLAND.

“ That Greenland had been discovered and inhabited by our old Norwegians and Icelanders, we are fully informed by the annals of Iceland ; where we read that the brave and valiant Erick Raude, who was the first discoverer of this country, after he, in company with several other Icelanders, in the year of our Lord 982, by mere casualty, fell in with the land and had taken a survey of its present state ; he returned to Iceland the next year, 983, spoke much in commendation of the land, calling it the Green-land, by which he persuaded many of his countrymen to follow him thither, in order to find out places fit for dwellings, and to settle there : (historians disagree about the exact time of the first settlement of Greenland : Pontanus refers it to the year 770). They no sooner were arrived and settled there, but they found that God was come along with them ; I mean the saving knowledge of His most holy word. For the said Erick Raude's son, called Lief, after he had been instructed in the Gospel truths by King Olaf, (who was the first christian king of Norway,) brought along with him from Norway to Greenland a priest, who taught and christened all the inhabitants of the country. Yet the Norwegians were not the original natives of the land, for not long after their arrival they met with the old inhabitants, a savage people dwelling on the western shore, originally descended from the Americans, as may, with great pro-

bability be gathered from the agreement of their persons, customs and habits, with those who inhabited the northern parts of Davis's Straits, advanced nearer and nearer to the south, and often made war upon the Norwegians. Concerning the cause of the ruin and the destruction of that so well-established Norwegian colony, there is nothing found on record.

"The ancient historians divide Greenland into two parts or districts, called the West Bzgd and East Bzgd. As to the Western district, which is said to have contained four parishes and one hundred villages, all we find in the ancient histories amounts to this, viz., that in the fourteenth century, it was sorely infested by a wild nation, called Schrellings, and laid so waste, that when the inhabitants of the eastern district came to the assistance of the Christians, and to expel the barbarous nation of the Schrellings, who had fallen upon the Christians, they found to their great astonishment, the province quite emptied of its inhabitants, and nothing remaining but some cattle and flocks of sheep, straying wild, unguarded round about the fields and meadows, whereof they killed a good number, which they brought home with them in their ships. By which it appears, that the Norwegian Christians, in the western district, were destroyed, and Christianity rooted out by the savage heathens. The modern inhabitants of West Greenland, being, no doubt, the offspring of the above-mentioned wild and barbarous Schrellings, they have no certain account to give us of the matter; though they will tell you, that the old decayed dwelling places and villages, whose ruins are yet seen, were inhabited formerly by a nation quite different from theirs; and they also affirm, that the ancient histories tell us, that their ancestors made war with them and destroyed them."

Egede's Description of Greenland, page 8.

NOTE 5.

*“ Yes.—Time’s mysterious and resistless hand,
Has since envelop’d ev’ry northern land;
As well the sunken land of Buss well known,
Where dark forgetfulness resides alone.”*

Canto 1, Page 6.

THE SUNKEN LAND OF BUSS.

“Columbus, in entering on his immortal pursuit, came to Britain to carry his purpose by kingly assistance. He was refused the protection he sought, and Spain profited by his disappointment. Two noble Venetians following his example, obtained a ship in Ireland and sailed to West Friesland, which their surprise at finding populous and flourishing caused them to announce as having been by them discovered. The names of these Venetians are Nicholas and Anthony Zeni, their discovery is dated 1380. This island West Friesland was laid down in the fifty-eighth degree between Iceland and Greenland. It is said to have been touched at by Frobisher in one of his voyages in search of gold in Greenland.

“The population in the hundred towns of this island placed so far north as represented, and so far to the southward of Iceland, was well worthy of the notice of the historians of the time. The site can only come within the casual glance of the wary mariner and in the latitude of the sunken land; such a man is guided by his fears to avoid the dangerous spot.”

NOTE 6.

*"Enormous bergs, detached from glacier piles,
To distant climates roll like floating isles."*

Canto 2, Page 20.

ICE-BERGS.

"Huge and prodigious mountains, of an astonishing bigness, lying as deep under the water, as they soar high in the air. These are pieces of the glaciers or ice-mountains of the land which lie near the sea, and, bursting, tumble into the sea and are carried away. They represent to the beholders afar off, many odd and strange figures; some of churches, castles with spires and turrets; others you would take to be ships under sail, and many have been deluded by them, thinking they were real ships, and going to board them. Nor does their figure and shape alone surprise, but also their diversity of colours pleases the sight: some are like white chrystal; others blue as sapphires, and others again green as emeralds."

Egede's description of Greenland, page 53.

NOTE 7.

*"The stores immense
That grasp the Pole and man repulses thence."*

Canto 2, Page 20.

GLACIERS.

"That extensive body of ice, which with occasional

tracts of lands, occupies the northern extremity of the earth, and prevents all access to the regions immediately surrounding the Pole, fills, it appears on an average, a circle of above two thousand geographical miles diameter, and presents an outline which, though subject to partial variations, is found at the same season of each succeeding year, to be generally similar, and often strikingly uniform."

Scoresby's Arctic Region, Vol. I., page 252.

NOTE 8.

*"Here lofty gothic arch, transparent, blue;
There caverns, rough and hollow, lost to view."*

Canto 2, Page 20.

PECULIAR APPEARANCE OF AN ICEBERG.

"A lofty berg this day, July 20, came in view, with a gothic arch, at least 100 feet high, passing quite through one extremity. The bottom of the arch was covered with the fragments that had fallen from the cavity above—over the crown of this arch a broad and heavy superstructure of the icy mass sat suspended, offering an appearance of stability awfully deceptive. The washing of the sea had worn a bay within the bosom of this berg, which bore strongly the semblance of land."

Bernard O'Reilly's Greenland, page 208.

NOTE 9.

“E'en summer here in rosy splendour reigns.”

Canto 2, Page 23.

SUMMER.

“In the summer you are delighted with a charming verdure, caused by the heat of the sun, reverberated from side to side, and concentrated in these lower parts of the valleys, surrounded by high rocks and mountains, for many hours together without intermission; but as soon as the sun is set the air is changed at once, and the cold ice-mountains make you soon to feel the nearness of their neighbourhood, and oblige you to put on your furs.”

Egede's Description of Greenland, page 52.

NOTE 10.

*“The shoot and seed are foster'd, night and day,
And brought to blossom to each solar ray.”*

Canto 2, Page 23.

VEGETATION.

“It may be remarked, that vegetation goes on uncommonly quickly in this country. Most of the plants spring up, flower and seed in the course of a month or six weeks. They are of dwarfish size. Some of the flowers are really pretty, but exhibit few colours, excepting yellow, white, and purple.

Scoresby's Arctic Regions, Vol. I. page 148.

NOTE 11.

*“ Objects for which one half the world are mad,
Would neither make the Uskee pleased or sad.”*

Canto 2, Page 25.

NATIONAL APPELLATION OF THE NATIVES.

“The national appellation by which these people are distinguished, is not Esquimaux, as has been so long received, but is, by themselves, pronounced Uskeeme; and of this appellation they are as proud as a native of this country is of the name of Briton.”

O'Reilly's Greenland, page 59.

NOTE 12.

*“ All earthly blessings the prized seal provides :
Clothing, and fire, and food for them besides.”*

Canto 4, Page 47.

THE SEAL.

“To the Esquimaux the seal is of as much importance as bread is to an European. Its flesh forms their most usual food. The fat is partly dressed for eating, and partly consumed in their lamps—the skin, which the Esquimaux dress by processes peculiar to themselves, is made water-proof—with the hair off it is used as coverings, instead of planks, for their boats, and as outer garments for themselves; shielded with which they can invest themselves and canoes in the water without getting their bodies wet—a single effort with their paddles re-

stores them to their proper position. It serves also as coverings for their tents, and for various other purposes."

Scoresby's Arctic Region, Vol. I. page 510.

NOTE 13.

*The narvals gambol in their peaceful haunts,
With mighty whales, companions of their wants."*

Canto 5, Page 58.

THE NARVAL.

"The narval, or sea-unicorn, is a beautiful animal; the skin is white, and elegantly mottled on the back and sides with black. The fins and tail are black, like the whale—(*balæna mysticetus*)—in general structure its habits are friendly to that animal, and they are frequently seen associated together, and their food is similar."

O'Reilly's Greenland, page 105.

NOTE 14.

"And seals disport in num'rous social bands."

Canto 5, Page 58.

SHOALS OF SEALS.

"Seals are often seen on their passage from one situation to another in very large shoals. In such cases, for the sake of respiration, they all appear every now and then, at the surface of the water, together springing up so

as to raise their heads and necks, and often their whole bodies, out of the water. Their progress is pretty rapid, their actions appear frisky, and their general conduct is productive of amusement to the spectator. The sailors, when they observe such a shoal, call it a seal's wedding."

Scoresby's Arctic Regions, Vol. I., page 509.

NOTE 15.

*"The arctic swallows make their stay awhile ;
Their graceful forms bedeck the floating isle."*

Canto 5, Page 58.

SEA SWALLOW.

"The tern, or sea-swallow, is a beautiful bird, seen in great numbers, sometimes thousands together, resting on an iceberg ; and, when on the wing, exhibits a graceful and elegant flight."

Bernard O'Reilly's Greenland, page 143.

NOTE 16.

*"Bright the aurora borealis plays,
And far and near its magic power displays."*

Canto 5, Page 58.

THE AURORA BOREALIS.

"The aurora borealis, in the spring of the year, about the new moon, darts streams of light all over the sky as

quick as lightning, especially if it be a clear night; and with such a brightness, that you may read by it as by day-light.

Egede's Description of Greenland, page 54.

NOTE 17.

"It rais'd its bulky form, then lash'd the sea."

Canto 5, Page 62.

THE WHALE.

"Sometimes the whales throw themselves into a perpendicular posture, with their heads downwards, and rearing their tails on high in the air, filled with vapours. The noise in calm weather is heard to a great distance; and the concentric waves produced by the concussion on the water, are communicated abroad to a considerable extent. Sometimes the whale shakes its tremendous tail in the air, which, crackling like a whip, resounds to the distance of two or three miles."

Scoresby's Arctic Regions, Vol. I. page 167.

NOTE 18.

"How I pursued the bounding deer inland."

Canto 5. Page 65.

REIN-DEER.

"Rein-deer are, in some places, in such great num-

bers, that you will see whole herds of them ; and, when they go and feed in herds, they are dangerous to come at. The natives spend the summer season in hunting rein-deer, going up to the innermost parts of bays, and carrying, for the most part, their wives and children along with them, where they remain, while eagerly hunting, pursuing, and destroying these poor deer, which have no place of safety but what the Esquimaux know of, when they are in any number ; then they chase them by cap-hunting, setting upon them on all sides, and surrounding them with all their women and children to force them into defiles and narrow passages, where the men, armed, lay in wait for them and kill them ; and when they have not people enough to surround them, then they put white poles to make up the number that is wanted, with pieces of turf to head them, which frightens the deer and hinders them from escaping.

Egede's Description of Greenland, page 62.

NOTE 19.

*"An hideous bear of dreadful size and form,
Sought out my Uskee's shelter from the storm."*

Canto 5, Page 67.

THE POLAR BEAR.

"In the 76th degree of latitude, the number of bears is so great that they, in droves, surround the natives' habitation, who then with their dogs fall upon them, and with their spears and lances kill them."

Egede's Description of Greenland, page 60.

NOTE 20.

“The polar bear is an animal of a very large size, and lives chiefly among the ice in the most northern parts, and feeds upon seals and fish. He exhibits an hideous, and frightful aspect, with white long hairs—he is greedy of human blood.”

Egede's Description of Greenland, page 59.

“An Esquimaux does not hesitate, even singly, to attack the polar bear, the fiercest and most terrible of all the arctic races. In this encounter, however, he must be aided by a band of his trusty dogs, which rush fearlessly on, keep the animal at bay, and assail him on all sides, while the master advances with his spear, and avoiding, with almost preternatural agility, the furious springs of the enraged monster, pierces him with repeated strokes.”

Leslie, Jamison's, and Murray's Narrative, p. 301.

NOTE 21.

“A tribe approached our happy home, and found
True hospitality their steps surround.”

Canto 5, Page 69.

HOSPITALITY OF THE ESQUIMAUX.

“Whenever a stranger comes into a house, he never asks for victuals, though never so hungry, nor is there any need he should, for they generally exercise great hospitality, and are free with what they have; and what is highly to be admired and praiseworthy, they have most things in common.”

Egede's Description of Greenland, page 126.

NOTE 22.

*“ Ullenak told me of the treacherous crimes
Of strangers, such as these in ancient times.”*

Canto 5, Page 80.

FATE OF FIVE GREENLANDERS.

“ The fate of the five Greenlanders, who had been brought to Denmark in the first expedition, (A.D. 1605,) was a melancholy one. Though they met with the kindest treatment, and were well supplied with stock, fish, and train, they frequently looked with wishful eyes and heart-breaking sobs towards the north. They at length escaped to sea in their Kayaks; but being driven back by a strong wind on to the coast of Schonen, and brought to Copenhagen, two of them died of grief. Two of the survivors again attempted flight, and only one of them was recovered. The latter was observed to weep most bitterly, whenever he saw a child hanging on its mother’s neck: whence it was supposed, for no one understood their language, that he had a wife and children in his native country.”

NOTE 23.

“ To view the iceberg’s wild convulsive shock.”

Canto 5, Page 83.

ICEBERGS.

Captain J., in the summer of 1824, was beset by the

ice in Davis's-straits, and had been for some time unable to move the ship in any direction, when the chief mate called out suddenly for him on deck, and hardly had he got thither, when he beheld one of those awfully sublime spectacles, common to the polar seas. Two mighty icebergs, driven by different currents, came in contact, and exploded with thundering noise and convulsive grandeur, while every thing, for some distance, was enveloped in the foaming and smoking waves. The surrounding floes also, which had previously extended as far as the eye could reach, (from the mast's head,) were broken and shattered to pieces; and although the ship was some miles off, she pitched to that degree that at times her bowsprit was enveloped in the agitated sea. So general and powerful was the effect of this awfully sublime conflict, that numerous bergs and floes were destroyed and cleared away, thereby enabling Captain J. to disentangle his ship from the ice with ease, although but an hour before it would have been madness to have attempted it. — The above was related to the author by Capt. J. of W——, in 1826.

NOTE 24.

*“The aurora borealis wildly shone,
As lightning when the storm is nearly done.”*

Canto 5, Page 84.

COLOURS OF THE AURORA BOREALIS.

“The aurora borealis was visible for several hours, chiefly in the zenith, where the figure it most delighted to assume was that of a long waving serpent of the most

dazzling brilliancy ; and colours of the most vivid purple, light blue, pink, yellow, and green, alternately bordered and mingled with the wild-fire above us.”

Capt. Lyon's Voyage in the year 1824, page 35.

NOTE 25.

*“ And once I well remember, when a friend,
Invited me a contest to attend.”*

Canto 5, Page 90.

ESQUIMAUX MANNER OF TAKING VENGEANCE.

“The Esquimaux show their wit chiefly in satirical songs, which they compose against one another : and he that overcomes his fellow in this way of debate, is admired and applauded by the rest of the assembly. If any body conceives a jealousy or bears a grudge to another upon any account, he sends to him and challenges him to a duel in such or such an assembly, where he will fight it out with him in taunting songs. Whereupon the defied, in defence of his honour, prepares his weapons, and does not fail to appear at the time and place appointed, if his courage does not forsake him. When the assembly is met and the combatants arrived, every body being silent and attentive to hear what end the combat will take, the challenger first enters the lists, and begins to sing, accompanying it with the beat of his drum. The challenged rises also, and in silence listens until his champion or adversary has done singing ; then he likewise enters the list armed with the same weapons, and lays about his party the best he can ; and thus alternately they sing, and he that first gives over is reckoned overcome and con-

quered. In this sort of taunting ditties they reproach and upbraid one another with their failings, &c. and this is their common way of taking vengeance."

Egede's Description of Greenland, page 156.

NOTE 26.

"This contest serves a higher purpose than mere diversion. It is an excellent opportunity for putting immorality to the blush, and cherishing virtuous principles; for reminding debtors of the duty of payment; for branding falsehood and detraction with infamy; for punishing fraud and injustice; and, most of all, for overwhelming adultery with its merited contempt. Nothing so effectually restrains a Greenlander from vice: and this pleasant way of revenge even prevents many from wreaking their malice in acts of violence and bloodshed."

Crantz' History of Greenland.

NOTE 27.

*"When, ah! alas! a band no power could stay,
Of fierce red Indians mark'd me for their prey."*

Canto 5, Page 92.

AVERSION OF RED INDIANS TO THE ESQUIMAUX.

"The Esquimaux, in the course of their wanderings, came in contact with other tribes of the American continent; and being of peaceful and very unwarlike habits, they were unfit to associate with their new neighbours. The consequence was, that the Red Indians, who lived

entirely by the chace, usually attributed to their timid neighbours every unfavourable change of weather that interfered with their hunting. Hence arose wars, which to the present day are continued with undiminished asperity. The appearance, too, of the Uskee, clad in his skins, his head wrapped in a hood, and his whole figure lowly, and little expressive of warlike character, was remarkably contrasted with the tall graceful figure of the red man, accustomed to warfare and impatient of intrusion."

O'Reilly's Greenland, page 67.

NOTE 28.

*"The dreary solitudes now yield relief,
And are become companions of my grief."*

Canto 5, Page 93.

FUNERAL DIRGE.

"The following extract of the funeral dirge of a father over his son, may serve as a specimen of natural eloquence:—'Woe is me, that I see thy empty seat! Thy mother has toiled in vain to dry thy garments. Behold! my joy is gone into darkness; it has crept into the cavern of the mountains. Once I went out at even tide, and was glad of heart: with straining eyes I watched, waiting for thy return. Thou camest; thou camest manfully, rowing, or emulously vying in the race with old and young—never didst thou return empty from the sea; thy kayak was always laden with seals and sea-fowl. Thy mother kindled a fire, and with snow-water she seethed them. Thy mother spread the feast of thy winning before the guests, and I took my portion among them. Thou de-

scriedst the red streamer of thy shallop from afar—‘there comes Lars!’ was thy cry: thou didst run with speed to the shore, and thy arm fastened the boat to her moorings. Then were thy seals produced, and thy mother cut out the blubber: in exchange for this the merchant brought linen and iron barbs. But thus it shall be no more; my bowels yearn when I think on thee. Ah! my friends, could I weep, as ye weep, it would be some solace to my woe. What have I left to wish for? Death alone seems desirable to me! But how shall my wife and children be sustained? I will yet live for a season; but my joy shall henceforth be placed in the rejection of all that once was dear to me.”

Crantz' History of Greenland, Vol. I. page 218.

NOTE 29.

*“Perils to man are scattered thick around,
From whirling fields of ice in contact bound.”*

Canto 6, Page 98.

MOTION OF FIELDS OF ICE.

“The occasional rapid motion of fields of ice, with the strange effects produced by such immense bodies on an opposing substance, is one of the most striking objects the polar seas present, and is certainly the most terrific. They not unfrequently acquire a rotatory movement, whereby their circumference attains a velocity of several miles per hour. A field thus in motion, coming in contact with another at rest, or more especially with another having a contrary direction of movement, produces a dreadful shock. A body of more than ten thousand millions of tons in weight, meeting with resistance when

in motion, produces consequences which it is scarcely possible to conceive. The weaker field is crushed with an awful noise ; sometimes the destruction is mutual ; pieces of such dimensions and weight are frequently piled upon the top to the height of twenty or thirty feet, while a proportionate quantity is depressed beneath. The view of these stupendous effects, in safety, exhibits a picture sublimely grand ; but where there is danger of being overwhelmed, terror and dismay must be the predominant feelings.

Scoresby's Arc. Reg. Vol 1, page 248.

NOTE 30.

"A fairer object cheers not polar lands."

Canto 6, Page 106.

HOLSTEINBORG.

Holsteinborg, a Danish settlement in Greenland, and the most interesting station in the polar world, is situated, according to the calculation of Captain Sir John Ross, when there in the Victory, on the 25th of July, 1829, in Lat. 66. 57. 36. N. Long. 54. 2. 30. W. from Greenwich. It has a good harbour, with a sandy bottom, and the tide rises and falls sixteen feet, rendering it peculiarly suited for the repairing of ships which might be damaged in those seas: hence it is much resorted to by those who require such assistance. In this way this friendly port has been hailed with joy by many a British crew. A lofty cliff of a conical shape, forms an unerring guide to it. The appearance of the houses and huts ; the spacious church, and surrounding rocks and mountains, are imprinted on

the mind of many a visitor, as the loveliest and most civilized scene of the arctic regions.

When the ship U. visited Holsteinborg, the Rev. K. Kijer was the missionary engaged in preaching the gospel to the Danish settlers and native converts, of the latter of whom more than six hundred are living in a state of civilization at and around that station. The steady and zealous labours of this worthy and enlightened missionary, cannot be appreciated. For many years he has continued to spend and be spent in this great cause; and from his intimate acquaintance with the Esquimaux language, he has increased the number of publications, and achieved much in producing those works which are calculated to evangelize the heathen.

NOTE 31.

“ Till the apostle of the north appeared ”

Canto 6, Page 107.

LIFE OF EGEDE.

“ The Rev. Hans Egede, the first and truly apostolic missionary among the Esquimaux, was born in Denmark, on the 21st of January, 1686. He was educated for the ministry, and became pastor to a congregation at Vogen, in Norway, and appears for some time to have exercised the same functions at Drontheun, in that kingdom. In an early period of his ministry he was filled with a strong desire of making himself acquainted with the fate of the Norwegian families who formerly settled in Greenland, of whom no intelligence had been received for several

centuries. All the inquiries which he could make led to the conclusion that that part of the coast, where these settlements had formerly existed, had been rendered inaccessible by the ice; and that the ancient settlers had been destroyed, either by the effects of the climate or the hostility of the natives.

“But these unfavourable representations did not repress the ardour of Egede to embark in this perilous undertaking; and to discover, if possible, the old Norwegian settlements, or to form a new one, and to devote his life to the instruction of the barbarous and uncivilized Greenlanders in the salutary truths of the christian religion. He was a man of warm temperament, and mingled with such a portion of enthusiasm as does not readily suffer its exertions to be relaxed by difficulties, or the hopes which it has conceived to be extinguished by inauspicious circumstances. For many years he attempted in vain to interest the Danish government, in the furtherance of the scheme which he had conceived. After more ineffectual attempts, his perseverance at last triumphed over every obstacle: he persuaded some merchants and others to subscribe some small sums, out of which he collected a capital of about £2,000: of this inconsiderable sum he himself had furnished £60, which constituted his little all.

“With these slender means, which seemed totally inadequate to the undertaking, a ship was purchased called the Hope, in which Egede was to be conveyed to Greenland, and to lay the foundation of the meditated establishment. But in the spring, the Danish monarch, Frederick the IVth, who had been brought to think more favourably of the expedition, appointed Mr. Egede to be pastor of the new colony, and missionary to the heathen, with a pension of £60 a-year, and £40 for his immediate exigencies.

Egede embarked for Greenland, with his wife and four

small children, upon the 12th of May, 1721, and he landed in Ball's river, in the 64th degree of north latitude, upon the 3d of July in the same year. The company on board the ship consisted of about forty persons. They lost no time in building a house, of stone and earth, upon an island near Kangek, which they called Haabets Oe, or Hope Island, after the name of the ship in which they had made the voyage. The conduct of Egede, as a missionary, deserves the highest praise. He conciliated the confidence of the natives, ministered to their wants, learned their language, and gradually introduced some additional rays of intellectual light into their minds.

“ Upon the death of Frederick, and accession of Christian the IVth, the settlement was ordered to be abandoned; and in 1731 a mandate was sent to that effect. The Danish monarch, either sympathising with the constancy, or moved by his (Egede's) entreaties, assisted him (as he was determined still to remain) with some supplies; and in the year 1733, he was cheered by the assurance that the mission should be more effectually supported. When the advanced age and growing infirmities of Egede permitted him not to continue his occupation, his eldest son, Paul, became his successor in the mission; and after an abode of fifteen years in this sterile region, he returned to Copenhagen in the year 1736. He was not, however, inattentive at home to the interests of the Mission, for he devoted much of his time to the instruction of young missionaries in the Esquimaux language. He also composed a grammar, a dictionary, and translated the New Testament for the use of the Esquimaux nation. He published, also, the description of Greenland at Copenhagen, the year preceding his much-lamented death, which took place in 1758.”

See Introduction to Egede's Greenland.

NOTE 32.

*“At other stations, too, such teachers live,
And Esquimaux their christian care receive.”*

Canto 6, Page 109.

THE MORAVIANS.

“The Moravians have three missionary stations in Greenland, and several on the coast of Labrador. Thousands of unenlightened heathens live and die unknown and unpitied among the immense wilds of North America, and unexplored islands of Greenland. Crantz, from his own knowledge, says, “within a circuit of a few miles nearly a thousand Greenlanders resided.”

NOTE 33.

*“To them the past, the future, is involved
In one vast labyrinth of gloom unsolved.”*

Canto 6, Page 110.

SUPERSTITION OF THE GREENLANDERS.

“As the Greenlanders acquire the most and best of their sustenance from the bosom of the sea, therefore many or most of them place their elysium in the abysses of the ocean, or the bowels of the earth, and think the deep cavities of the rocks are the avenues leading to it. There, as they imagine, dwells Torngarsuk and his mother—there a joyous summer is perpetual, and a shining

sun is obscured by no night—there is the fair limpid stream, and an abundance of fowls, fishes, reindeer, and their beloved seals ; and these all to be caught without toil.”

Cruntz' History of Greenland.

NOTE 34.

*“ And heathen ignorance, and mental gloom,
Attend at birth, and follow to the tomb.”*

Canto 6, Page 111.

ANGEKUTS.

“The Esquimaux hold that there is a Spiritual Being which they call Torngarsuk ; and the Angekuts, their prophets, have each a Torngak, or familiar spirit, who attends him. If any one aspires to the office of an Angekut, and has a mind to be initiated into these mysteries, he must retire from the rest of mankind into some remote place, from all commerce : there he must look for a large stone, near which he must sit down and invoke Torngat, or Torngarsuk, who without delay presents himself before him. This presence so terrifies the new candidate of Angekutism, that he immediately (they believe) sickens, swoons away, and dies ; and in this condition he lies for three whole days ! and then he comes to life again, arises in a newness of life, and betakes himself to his home again. The science of an Angekut consists of three things :—1. That he mutters certain spells over sick persons, in order to make them recover their former health. 2. He communes with Torngat, and from him receives instruction to give people advice what course they are to

take in affairs, that they may have success and prosper therein. 3. He is by the same informed of the time and cause of any body's death; or for what reason any body comes to an untimely and uncommon end; and if any fatality shall befall a man. And though this lying spirit of the Angekuts is oftentimes found out by their gross mistakes, when the events do not answer their false predictions, as commonly happens; yet, for all that, they are in great honour and esteem among this stupid and ignorant nation; insomuch that nobody ever dares refuse the strictest obedience to what they command him in the name of Torngat; fearing that, in case of disobedience, some great affliction and misfortune may happen to him. Among many other fibs and most impudent lies, they also make these silly Esquimaux believe, that they can, with hands and feet tied, mount up to heaven and see how matters stand there, and likewise descend to hell (or the lower regions of the earth), where the fierce Torngat keeps his court.

"A young Angekut must not undertake this journey but in the fall of the year, by reason that then the lowermost heaven, which they take the rainbow to be, is nearest to the earth."

Egede's Description of Greenland, page 187.

NOTE 35.

"Unfolds the sorrow of an orphan's pain."

Canto 6, Page 111.

DESERTION OF ORPHANS.

"When a poor widow lies distracted with grief upon the ground, with the children weeping for the loss of her

husband, all his goods are slyly conveyed away by her hypocritical comforters ; and when stripped of all, the miserable wretch with her children are left, and finally starved or frozen to death."

Crantz, v. 1, p. 176.

NOTE 36.

"The towering iceberg which our wonder draws."

Canto 6, Page 116.

AVALANCHE.

"I was particularly fortunate in witnessing one of the grandest effects which these polar glaciers ever present. A strong north-westerly swell having for some hours been beating on the shore, had loosened a number of fragments attached to the iceberg, and various heaps of broken ice denoted shoots of the seaward edge. As we rowed towards it with a view of proceeding close to its base, I observed a few little pieces fall from the top, and while my eye was fixed upon the place, an immense column, probably fifty feet square and 150 high, began to leave the parent ice at the top, and leaning majestically forward, with an accelerated velocity, fell with an awful crash into the sea.

"The water into which it plunged was converted into an appearance of vapour, or smoke, like that from a furious cannonading. The noise was equal to that of thunder, which it nearly resembled. The column which fell was nearly square, and in magnitude resembled a church. It broke into a thousand pieces."

Scoresby's Arctic Region, vol. 1, page 104.

NOTE 37. Page 116.

IMMENSE ICEBERGS.

“ Parry, in the river Clyde, in Davis’s Straits, discovered an iceberg upwards of two miles in length—and he could find no bottom near others with 110 fathoms of line.”

Parry’s Voyage, 1819-20. Page 11.

NOTE 38.

“ ’Tis here is found the north magnetic pole.”

Canto 5th, Page 57.

DISCOVERY OF THE NORTH MAGNETIC POLE.

“ As soon as I had satisfied my own mind on this subject, I made known to the party this gratifying result of all our joint labours ; and it was then that amidst mutual congratulations we fixed the British flag on the spot and took possession of the northern Magnetic Pole and its adjoining territory, in the name of Great Britain and King William the Fourth. We had abundance of materials for building in the fragments of limestone that covered the beach, and we therefore erected a cairn of some magnitude, under which we buried a canister containing a record of the interesting fact, only regretting that we had not the means of constructing a pyramid of more importance, and of strength sufficient to withstand the assaults of time and of the Esquimaux.”

Commander Ross’s Narrative.

Sir J. Ross’s Second Voyage. Page 557.

NOTE 39.


"And with its silken coat the musk-ox feeds."

Canto 5, Page 58.

MUSK-OX HUNT.

"We went on laboriously enough for two hours over a very rugged country and through deep snow; when finding that the footsteps of the dogs no longer followed those of the oxen, we "concluded that they had got up with the animals, and were probably holding one or both of them at bay. We soon found this to be the fact, on turning the angle of a hill; when the sight of a fine ox at bay before the three dogs, cured our fatigue in an instant, and we went off ourselves at full speed to the rescue. Poo-yet-tah, however, kept the lead, and was in the act of discharging his second arrow when I came up. We saw that it had struck on a rib, since it fell out without even diverting the attention of the animal from the dogs, which continued barking and dodging round it, seizing it by the heels whenever they had an opportunity, or when it turned to escape, and then retreating as it faced them. In the mean time it was trembling with rage, and labouring to reach its active assailants, but unable to touch them, experienced as they were in this service.

"It was easy to see that my companion's weapons were of little value in this warfare, or that the victory would not at least have been gained under many hours, as he continued to shoot without apparent effect, finding his opportunities for an aim with much difficulty, and losing much time afterwards in recovering his arrows. I was pleased therefore, independently of the value of the expected game, to find an opportunity of showing him the




superiority of our arms, and I therefore fired at the animal with two balls, at the distance of about fifteen yards. They took effect, and it fell ; but rising again, made a sudden dart at us : standing close together as we were, we avoided the attack by dodging behind a stone which was luckily near us ; on which, rushing with all its force, it struck its head so violently that it fell to the ground with such a crash that the hard ground around us fairly echoed to the sound. My guide on this attempted to stab it with a knife, but failing in this, he sought shelter behind the dogs, which now again came forward to the attack. At this time it was bleeding so profusely that the long hair on its sides were matted with blood ; yet its rage and strength seemed undiminished, as it continued to advance and butt with the same ferocity as before.

“ In the mean time I had reloaded my gun behind the stone, and was advancing for another shot, when the creature rushed towards me as before, to the great alarm of Poo-yet-tah, who called to me to return to the same shelter. But I had time for a cool aim, and it immediately fell on the discharge of both barrels, but not till it was within five yards of me. The sight of this fallen enemy made my companion scream and dance for joy ; and on his coming up it was dead, one ball having passed through the heart and the other having shattered to pieces the shoulder joint. He was lost in astonishment at the effect of the fire-arms ; first carefully examining the holes which the balls had made, and pointing out to me that some of them had passed quite through the animal. But it was the state of the broken shoulder which most surprised him ; nor would it be very easy to forget his look of horror and amazement when he looked up in my face and exclaimed, ‘ how-ek-poke,’ (it is broken).”

Capt. Sir J. Ross's Second Voyage. Page 349.

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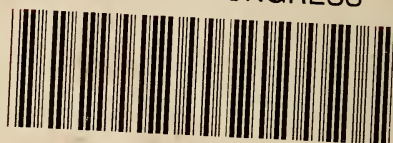
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